CYPRUS

A civilization plundered

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To sea-girt Cyprus, where Apollo bade
That I should dwell, and, for the homeland's sake
Give it the island-name of Salamis

(Euripides, *Helen*, 148-150)

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THE HELLENIC PARLIAMENT

It is well known that the collective memory does not exist *per se* but is recreated continuously through the prism of the present. By constantly reconstituting the collective memory every nation, every people, forges its cultural identity, harking back to the past in search of its genealogical roots and its ethnic consciousness. And through this each person also gains self-awareness, since he is only able to perceive his past with reference to the historical experience and the cultural heritage of his nation.

The violent erasure of the collective memory, the deliberate pulverization of the historical past, the desecration and depredation of the cultural heritage of the Other aim at dissolving the national community's ties of solidarity and serve policies of cultural genocide and ethnic cleansing. On the other hand, the rejection of a traumatic historical experience, such as that of the plunder, destruction and commercialization of the monuments in occupied Cyprus, often leads to concealment of the injurious event, and consequently to the collective lethe and the legitimization of *faits accomplis*.

So activation of the collective memory, the ongoing and systematic re-examination of the past, the scholarly demonstration of the ethnic continuity of Hellenism as a whole are a paramount duty, as well as a starting point for every creative collective effort for the present and the future.

But if the collective memory is fluid, the unity of Hellenism and the common cultural heritage of Greece and Cyprus from the dawn of history to the present day, is a firm reality.

The Hellenic Parliament, as fiduciary of the rights of universal Hellenism, has placed this book under its aegis, in the hope of heightening the awareness of the international community and of drawing the attention of the international decision-making centres to the terrible injustice that is still being committed by the occupation forces in martyred Cyprus, not only against the Greek cultural heritage but also against European and global civilization.

In an age when the legal safeguarding of singularity and diversity, respect for the identity of the Other and unimpeded dialogue between cultures worldwide are not just commonplace but a principle of action for international organizations – as is demonstrated by the World Interparliamentary Union's Universal Declaration on Democracy –, the continued pillaging of the cultural heritage of Cypriot Hellenism, the occupation and spoliation of the artistic creations of Cyprus constitute a blatant violation of International Law and a patent transgression of fundamental human rights.

The locating, rescuing, claiming and repatriating of the art treasures of Cyprus are acts to restore international legality, as well as the highest duty of Hellenism everywhere, which must know that whoever loses his past sooner or later loses his ethnic identity and his national independence.

Apostolos C. Kaklamanis
Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament

The cultural heritage of every country, its monuments and works of art, embodies the intellectual presence and the power of the people that created it. Its property is the common property of mankind. Indeed, in an era in which Europe seeks union through freedom, the cultural heritage of the European peoples and its effective protection are part of the identity of our continent and the creative power of its people, an essential component of our future union, a common possession and legacy.

In Cyprus today the cultural heritage is being barbarously violated. After the Turkish invasion in 1974, the forced expulsion of the Greeks, the occupation, colonization and alteration of the demographic reality of the island, came the destruction, the desecration and the predatory buying and selling of the art treasures of Cypriot Hellenism.

This album deals with the cultural destruction in occupied Cyprus and denounces the Turkish violence that flouts international law to the detriment of monuments, works of art, buildings, which suffer maltreatment as witnesses to the centuries-long Greek presence in the region. The violence of a state which did not stop at military conquest and driving out the Greek population, but wanted to destroy or even to profit from the 'booty' that its army secured. The violence that obliges a European country, the Republic of Cyprus, to seek in the international arena ways of buying back and protecting its own cultural-spiritual property. This album should be seen as a formal declaration that we will not leave our cultural heritage at the mercy of vandals and smugglers. This publication is, in the end, an exercise of a legal right that we invoke, not only as Greeks but also as civilized people, as citizens of Europe and the world: as bearers of the ecumenical spirit that the treasures nowadays violated so vitally convey.

Thinking people the world over, as vehicles and fiduciaries of the global cultural heritage, have always considered it their duty to oppose transgressions of liberty, such as the building and maintaining of the Berlin Wall, and of another wall that nowadays divides the island of Aphrodite. It is to thinking people everywhere, in academies, spiritual and educational foundations, that we address our anxious appeal to participate in the noble effort to protect the Cypriot cultural heritage. And we appeal in particular to the directors of large museums abroad not to buy works originating from the looting of occupied Cyprus.

The plunder and destruction of Cypriot cultural property is an injustice that we must help put a stop to once and for all.

Ioannis Pesmazoglou

Academician
President of the Committee for the Protection
of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

In the first days after the Turkish invasion in 1974 crimes that are an affront to human dignity were perpetrated. On the surface the cold-blooded murders, rapes and acts of violence appeared to be simply a repetition of Ottoman tradition, which gave the conqueror the right to satisfy all his needs at the expense of the conquered. However, with hindsight it becomes clear that the aim of all these acts was to create fear. Fear that drove people from their homes and which brought down the curtain on the first act of a diabolical drama, which would later be called, from recent experience in the Bosnian crisis, 'ethnic cleansing'.

The people left. But the monuments (ancient and more recent) remained. Our churches, cemeteries, place names and traditions, all the components of our cultural heritage, a heritage accumulated from the past, which accompanies us in the present and which we hope to bequeath to future generations. Our ethnic and religious heritage embodies our touchstone, our cultural diacritica and our identity.

Alas! The plot of the second act of the same drama was to eradicate this heritage. The monuments that are silent witnesses of our presence had to go, either through destruction or despoliation. It could be argued that the sale of antiquities and cultural goods is a global phenomenon and that the little island of Cyprus is no exception to this disgraceful clandestine trade which, according to official figures from UNESCO for 1989-90, reached a level of £2.5 billion at open auctions alone.

However, the removal of a whole set of wall-paintings from the church of Saint Themonianos at Lysi could not have been done under cover of darkness by individual antiquities thieves. As the archives of the Turkish antiquity thief Aydin Dikmen – now awaiting trial in Munich – attest, the wall-paintings were removed by a team of specialists who indeed observed all the rules of the modern science of conservation.

The famous mosaics from the church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi were removed by the same team, with the collaboration of the occupation forces. Their illegal export for sale abroad implicated *ipso facto* the co-operation of the unlawful regime. The pending trial of Aydin Dikmen will at last throw light on this major chapter in the official looting of antiquities and the degree to which Ankara respects and applies the international treaties to which it is a signatory.

There is no need to repeat here the impressions of the two British journalists, John Fielding and Martin Smith, who visited occupied Cyprus in 1976. Leaving aside all other remarks, we focus on the church of Christ Antiphonetes at Kalograia and their conclusions on the perversity of its desecration. The wall-paintings were still in the church at the time of the journalists' visit and they had no idea of how the drama was to unfold. Most of the wall-paintings that once adorned the church are now in the hands of the Munich police, and their fate will be decided by German justice.

Other wall-paintings from the same church have been bought back and repatriated by the Church of Cyprus. Along with the wall-paintings there are dozens of icons and many ancient artefacts plundered from private collections in Famagusta.

It is of course impossible in the limited space of this preface to enumerate even those cases that have hit the headlines and concern the repatriation of objects or destruction of monuments. We shall confine ourself to the consequences of the Turkish invasion on the Archaeological Service of Cyprus.

The most serious blow dealt to the Department of Antiquities of the Ministry of Communications and Public Works in its 40-year history till 1974 was, without doubt, the Turkish invasion in July of that year. Very important archaeological sites, such as Enkomi, Salamis, Soloi, the Medieval town of Famagusta, the Kyrenia ship in the homonymous fortress, Byzantine and Medieval monasteries, churches and monu-

ments in traditional architecture were left at the mercy of the army of occupation. In all 197 monuments scheduled under the Law on Antiquities are now in occupied territory. Hundreds more archaeological sites and monuments that had been located during the course of preparing the Gazetteer for Protection were not included in the Law because research was still in progress until the Turkish invasion.

The district Museum of Famagusta, the Museum of Folk Art in Kyrenia, and hundreds of registered collections of antiquities were plundered, and icons were stolen from the 500 and more churches in the occupied regions.

The important work under way by the Department of Antiquities in the Provinces of Kyrenia and Famagusta was cut short. The archaeological excavations at Salamis, Enkomi, Apostolos Andreas, Ayios Epiktitos and elswhere, that were being conducted by foreign archaeological missions, were also stopped.

Primary concern of the Department of Antiquities immediately after the invasion was to evacuate the archaeological treasures from the Cyprus Museum, which stood barely 200 metres from the cease-fire line. The most important objects were taken to the South and then gradually, with the indefatigable efforts of the Greek Archaeological Service, transported to Greece. Some of them were exhibited in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, until 1979.

When the danger from hostilities had passed the Department of Antiquities began work in earnest. Its displaced members, mainly technical staff, were appointed to other districts.

The archaeologists went out into the provinces to conduct excavations, with the aim of boosting the morale of the Cypriot people but also of helping the economy by providing employment for refugees. The conservation teams buckled down to the task of restoring the damage suffered by the monuments from the indiscriminate bombardment by Turkish airforce planes. It should be noted that the famous Paphos mosaics were bombed, even though no battles were fought with the invading army in that area.

In this critical period for the archaeology of Cyprus the support of the foreign archaeological schools, private individuals and especially of the Archaeological Society at Athens, was immense. The foreign archaeological missions' refusal of Ankara's invitation to continue their excavations in the occupied territory was truly an act of solidarity. The Department of Antiquities, valuing the support of the foreign archaeological missions, granted them new sites to excavate in the free regions. As a direct result of this generous policy of the Department, Cypriot archaeology very soon regained its prominent place in international archaeological research. The publication of the Department's annual report continued without break, while several monographs also appeared. In 1978 the first conference after the invasion was organized, on the subject 'Cyprus-Crete from 2000 to 500 BC'.

In response to the growth of tourism after the first years of the invasion, the Department gave priority to the excavation of sites that held promising prospects for the development of cultural tourism. Paphos replaced Salamis, while in parallel emphasis was placed on the environs of Curium and Amathous. The registering of Paphos in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980 and the subsequent registering of nine churches in the Troodos enhanced the prestige of Cyprus and the number of foreign visitors to our island increased accordingly.

However, whatever the Department of Antiquities has achieved with international and mainly Greek support, can never compensate for the loss of important archaeological sites and monuments that are still at the mercy of the Attila forces. The persistent petitioning of UNESCO and other international organizations immediately after the invasion led to the mission by the Canadian J. Dalibard, who recorded objectively the situation in the occupied part of the island. His first report remained unpublished for years, until it was modified in such a way that it did not incriminate the

invader. Our efforts to establish a permanent UNESCO mission in Cyprus have been consistently thwarted by the occupation regime, which demands recognition as the precondition for accepting such a body.

Our struggle to preserve the cultural heritage of the occupied territory is continuous and on many fronts. Right after the invasion the Department of Antiquities sent air-conditioning equipment to the occupied fortress of Kyrenia, since this is essential for maintaining the Kyrenia ship under stable conditions – an act that recalls the siege of the Acropolis by Georgios Karaiskakis, who gave the Turks lead for making ammunition in order to save the Parthenon.

Our endless protests about endangered monuments and archaeological sites have led several times, under international pressure, to the halting of works, such as the marking out of house plots in the area of the cemetery at Salamis and, recently, the saving (we hope) of the Saint Makarios Monastery, which belongs to the Armenian Community of Cyprus.

The monitoring of the international antiquities market, wherever possible, to locate and repatriate Cypriot antiquities, is a constant concern of the Department. The support and assistance of directors of museums abroad in this endeavour has been touching to say the least. A characteristic example is the case of the mosaics from the Virgin Kanakaria church, where the joint struggle of the Department of Antiquities and the Church of Cyprus in the American courts was vindicated. The compromise settlement reached between the Menil Foundation in Texas and the Holy Archbishopric of Cyprus concerning the wall-paintings from the church of Saint Themonianos is another exemplary collaboration. The continuous stream of information and the solidarity of various museums in our struggle led the antiquities smuggler Aydin Dikmen into the trap of selling to the Archbishopric of Cyprus icons and wall-paintings that are its rightful property.

For our struggle to be effective we must be always on the alert, always well-informed to present a documented case.

Essential is the heightening of awareness in the centres of decision-making, which is achieved through publications, such as the present one, a commendable initiative of the Committee for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus.

We congratulate and thank wholeheartedly the Committee and the Hellenic Parliament, which through its sponsorship and authority elevates the task of enlightenment to another plane. The active support of the Hellenic Parliament in all international fora is an expression of the doctrine of a single cultural area, which for many years now has been functioning quietly and steadily for the good of our common cultural tradition.

Sophocles Hadjisavvas
Director of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus

The Work of the Committee for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus (1985-1997)

The Committee for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus is the only organized movement in Greece concerned with publicizing the cultural aspect of the Cyprus problem.

The calamity of Cyprus in 1974 shocked Greek public opinion. Together with reports on the savage military invasion, the occupation and partition of the island, the expulsion of 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes and the 2000 missing persons, photographs reached Athens of vandalized churches in the occupied territories along with alarming information on the destruction and looting of the island's historical monuments. In no time choice Cypriot Byzantine icons and abundant antiquities began to appear on the international art market, plundered from museums, private collections and clandestine excavations, as soon became clear. Early in 1975 the government and the Church of Cyprus addressed their first appeals to the world community to stop Turkey's flagrant violation of international law.

Nevertheless the magnitude of the crime against the Cypriot cultural heritage had yet to be comprehended, nor had it been realized then that destruction of the cultural heritage was a basic axis of a more general plan of ethnic cleansing that followed the invasion by Turkish troops. Together with the loss of human life and the eradication of monuments that stood as incontravertible witnesses to the centuries-long presence of Hellenism in Cyprus, Turkish policy aimed at the gradual acceptance of the new *status quo* and the *fait accompli* of the invasion, that is the violation of international legality and the abolition of the historical, social and cultural situation in Cyprus before 1974.

The Committee was founded expressly to heighten awareness of this dimension of the Cypriot tragedy and to promote the common cause – for Greece and Cyprus – of rescuing the island's cultural heritage. In 1985 intellectuals, academicians, university professors, prominent journalists set up the first Administrative Council, of which the late Professor Loukas Moussoulos, himself a Cypriot and at that time President of the Athens Academy, was chairman. The Committee's aims were *inter alia*: To inform Greek and foreign public opinion of the scale of destruction and looting of historical monuments in occupied Cyprus. To locate stolen antiquities in the international markets and to take effective action to ensure their return to Cyprus. To secure free access to the archaeological sites in occupied Cyprus and the continuation of scientific research on the monuments there, as well as the handing over to the Greek Cypriots of their churches and monasteries for the performance of their religious duties.

The Committee has been chaired by the academicians Loukas Moussoulos (1985), Manolis Chatzidakis (1985-93), Menelaos Pallantios (1993-94) and Ioannis Pesmazoglou (1994-).

In 1985, in the framework of the events to celebrate 'Athens European City of Culture', the Committee collaborated with the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, the Athens Academy, the Cypriot Embassy in Athens and the Pierides Foundation, to organize the exhibition 'Cyprus: The plundering of a 9000 year-old civilization', housed in the Athens Academy. Apart from Cypriot antiquities and Byzantine icons, the exhibition included photographs-documents which presented publicly for the first time the extent of the destruction and plunder. The message transmitted from the paramount intellectual institution of Hellenism on the danger of destruction of the cultural heritage of Cyprus acquired the dimension of a major national issue.

The exhibition 'Cyprus: The plundering of a 9000 year-old civilization' continued its journey to Thessaloniki (1985-6), Rhodes (1986-7) and the European Parliament in Strasbourg (1988). This move by the Committee contributed to the passing of a resolution by the European Parliament against Turkey (15 December 1988). The exhibition was mounted subsequently in the Town Hall of Tours (1988) and Manchester (1989). In 1993 and 1994 it

was presented in other towns in Greece as well as in the Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Athens, as part of the exhibition 'Cyprus: 20 years after' (1994). On the Committee's initiative the exhibition 'Cyprus: 9000 years of civilization' was organized in the Town Hall of Corfu, on the occasion of the European Union Summit Meeting held there in 1994.

The bilingual catalogue of the exhibition was distributed to leading figures in Letters, Arts and Politics in Greece and abroad, as well as to the members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg (1988) and, in collaboration with Greek Euro-MPs, in Brussels (1995).

The catalogue *Cyprus: The plundering of a 9000 year-old civilization* has constituted a reference point, providing bibliographical, legal and procedural backing for Cypriot demands for the return of stolen antiquities. It documented and consolidated arguments concerning clandestine digging, pilfering and illegal sale of Cypriot antiquities, demonstrating that this activity is part of the systematic endeavour to alter the cultural identity of Cyprus. It is noted that the first edition (1985) included photographs of the mosaics from the Virgin Kanakaria church at Lythrangomi in Turkish-occupied Famagusta, of the wall-paintings from Christ Antiphonetes in the Kyrenia region and from Saint Themonianos at Lysi, as well as the devotional icons from Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis, which had been pillaged by Turkish smugglers and offered for sale by unscrupulous dealers in Europe and America.

The recent discovery of these missing cultural treasures, which were mentioned from the outset in the contents of the catalogue, proves beyond a shadow of doubt that the Turkish accusations of spurious propaganda by the Greeks were and are far removed from the truth. Turkey's crime against Greek cultural achievements of millennia has been proven. And it is still going on.

The recent reprint of the catalogue (1998) stresses on the one hand the continuing destruction and criminal looting of the priceless cultural heritage of Cyprus and on the other, with the return of some of the stolen treasures, vindicates the work of the Committee and all those who have struggled and are struggling for the same cause.

The venerable saintly figures of the Kanakaria mosaics, the wall-paintings from Christ Antiphonetes and Saint Themonianos, the Byzantine icons from Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis, which are now safe in the hands of their rightful owners in Cyprus, inspire and bless the struggle to save the cultural heritage of Cyprus in general.

The present album highlights the Committee's incessant efforts to mobilize the international community, in order to save the monuments of the Art and History of the Cypriot people. The response of the Hellenic Parliament, and of its Speaker Mr Apostolos Kaklamanis personally, in supporting its publication underlines the importance and priority they attach to this capital issue for Hellenism as a whole. The Committee for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus expresses its thanks to the Right Honorable Mr Apostolos Kaklamanis for his encouragement of its activities, which are of crucial significance for the Nation.

Maria Anagnostopoulou

Archaeologist
General Secretary of the Committee
for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

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The Looting of Cyprus

Maria Anagnostopoulou
General Secretary of the Committee
for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

Map of Cyprus showing the places where looting has taken place.

The Crucifix from the church of Saint Prokopios in the village of Syngrasi.
Photograph taken immediately after the invasion in 1974.

Twenty-four years have passed since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. It began in 1974. There is no end in sight. The violence and the violation by Attila goes on. The conquerors continue their systematic eradication of the cultural heritage of the Cypriot people. The list of archaeological sites, museums and private collections that have been plundered in the occupied territory is a long one. Entire libraries have disappeared, such as the unique large library of Mitsos Marangos in Famagusta and the Hadjiioannou library. And collections of antiquities likewise, such as the unrivalled collection belonging to Christakis Hadjiprodromou in Famagusta.

As soon as the invasion stopped, the Turks started illegal digging, especially in those regions not easily accessible to foreigners, which they designate as under military control. The anguished, helpless Cypriots see their land being churned and the works of their ancestors turned into money through smuggling. The phrase in the Turkish newspapers 'fresh goods arrived in Istanbul' means that ancient vases and figurines, Byzantine icons and wall-paintings have arrived from occupied Cyprus.

Since 1974 the foreign markets have been literally flooded with stolen Cypriot antiquities. Foreign museums and private collections have been enriched. The pages of Cypriot antiquities in the catalogues of well-known auction houses are endless. Those archaeological treasures that have not been purloined by the authorities have been plundered by the occupation army, individuals and smugglers.

Very few have been repatriated, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Antiquities Service of Cyprus. The Republic of Cyprus pays large sums to rescue cultural goods that are its by right. The contribution of the Leventis Foundation to this struggle for repatriation is most significant. Scholarship has been dealt a heavy blow too. Excavations ongoing for decades by foreign archaeological missions, such as the French at Salamis and the Canadians at Soloi, in what is now occupied territory, were brought to a halt. Unfortunately for the discipline of archaeology, researchers did not manage to publish the results of their last investigations. Today Turkish antiquities thieves are digging and looting these very sites.

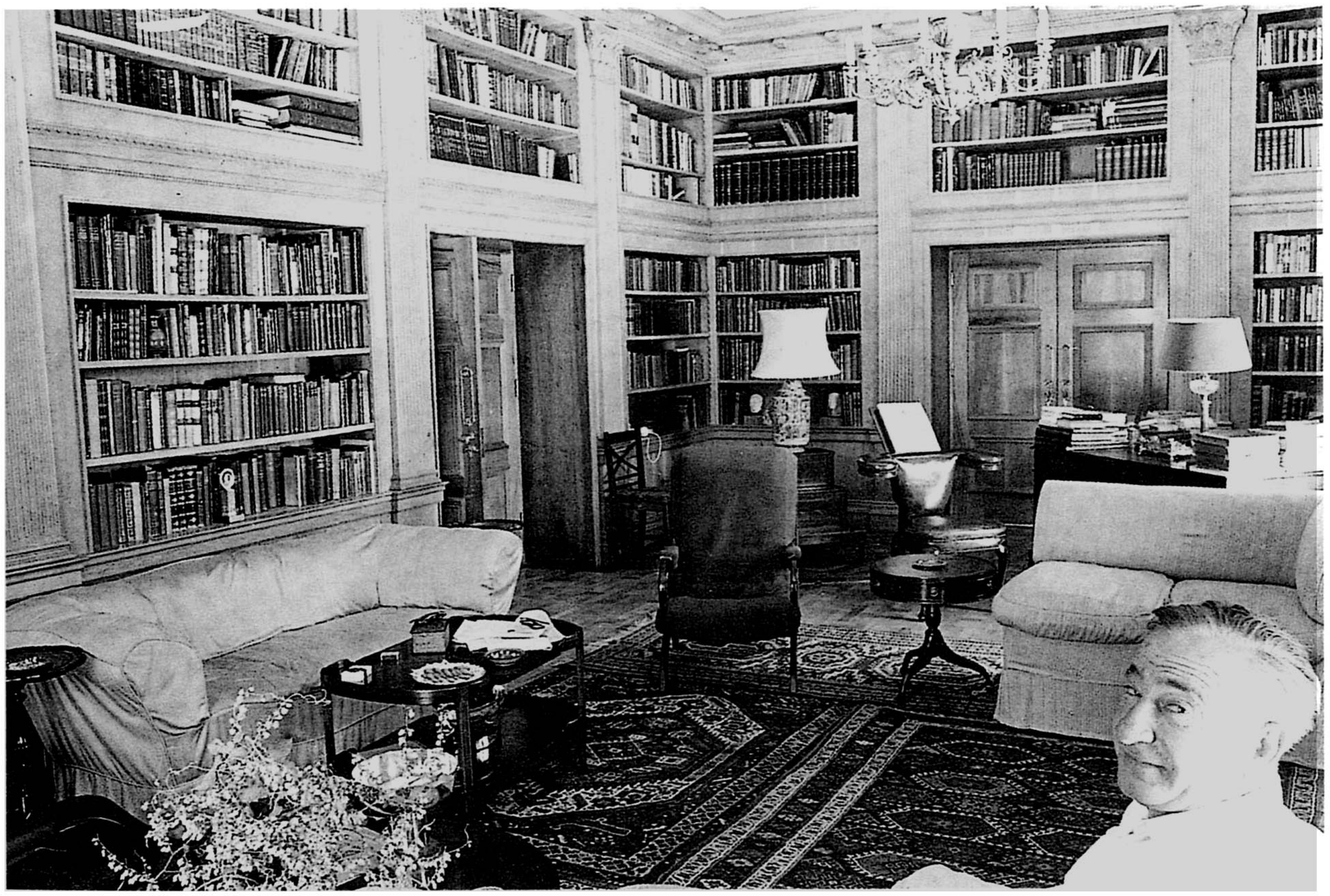
From the moment 38% of the land of the Republic of Cyprus was captured, the Cypriot government has not ceased petitioning foreign governments and international organizations, the directors of foreign museums etc., in its efforts to persuade them not to accept stolen treasures and so thwart the illegal trafficking of antiquities.

Only a handful of museums has responded, refusing to purchase the plundered heirlooms and co-operating with the legal owners so that, after protracted struggles and hard bargaining, some works have been returned. Only a very few customs authorities, such as that at Dover, have handed over confiscated

Detail of the icon of the Virgin. Brought from the occupied territories, it is now in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation. A Turkish soldier has scratched on it with his bayonet his date of conscription into the army.

View of the part of the Mitsos Marangos library with some 15,000 handsomely bound rare books on Cyprus.
The owner of the collection, M. Marangos, is seated front right.
The photograph was taken before the library was ruthlessly looted in August 1974.
Alas, nothing is known of the fate of the volumes.

The plundered church of the Virgin Mandryna.
The icons and ecclesiastical vessels have been stolen and the iconostasis destroyed.
Photograph: Klaus Gallas 1990.



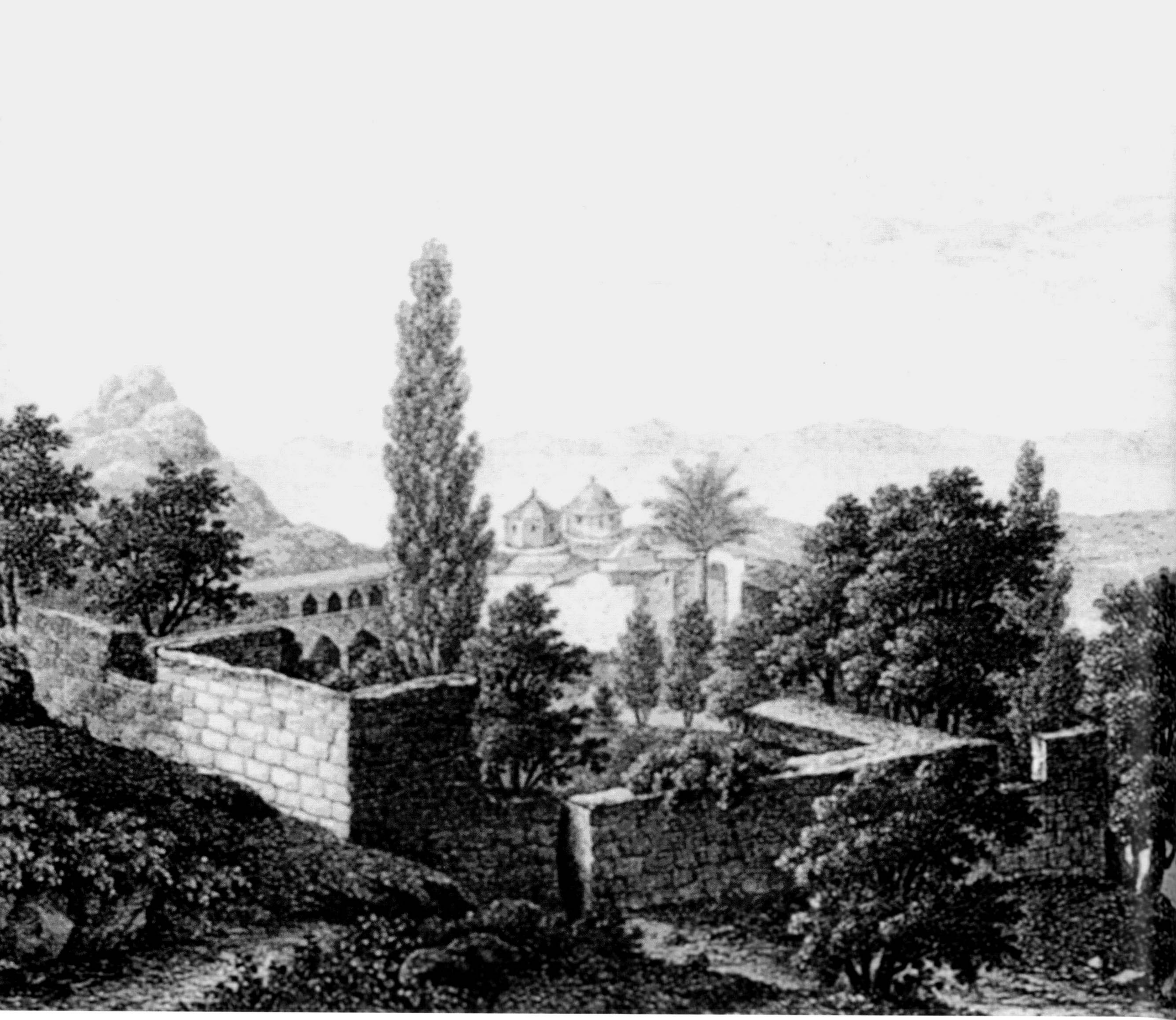
icons and ancient vases to the Cypriot authorities.

The monasteries and churches have suffered most from the conqueror's vengeance. Destruction began in 1974, during the invasion, and has continued systematically in the greedy hands of the occupying power. The churches have been stripped of their Byzantine wall-paintings. Woodcarved iconostases are sold by the metre in foreign markets and movable treasures – icons, prelatic vestments, ecclesiastical vessels, holy *keimelia* – end up in all parts of the world. Icons were cut into two or three pieces, so that they were easier to sell. Packed in sacks, the art and history of Cypriot culture set off from Adana and Istanbul for the illegal markets of Europe and America. It seems from the recent discovery in Osaka of the bema door from the church of Saint Anastasia at Peristeronas, Famagusta, that the trade has now turned towards Japan.

In 1940 the Church of Cyprus decided to gather portable Byzantine icons, precious manuscripts and woodcarved works in the Metropolis of Kyrenia. At the time of the invasion there were some 150 valuable icons in the church of Saint Spyridon at Tremetousia, undergoing or awaiting conservation. So hundreds of icons from these collections disappeared. From the Metropolis of Kyrenia only the icon of Archangel Michael, which had been sold in Holland, was returned to Cyprus in 1985. Cypriot Professor V. Karageorghis, in his lecture to the convention of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), held in Athens in 1984, quoted the following excerpts from Mehmet Yassin's interview in the Turkish Cypriot magazine *Olay* (26 April 1982):

'Icons gathered from churches and museums in different parts of Cyprus were all placed together in four large suitcases. Some were sawn into two or three pieces. They were discovered while they were trying to smuggle them out from Ankara airport. Hundreds of icons worth tens of thousands of Turkish lira have been stolen and taken abroad. Only a few of them have been found again. On 18 March 1981 icons placed in three packing cases labelled "Personal property" were smuggled to Germany from the airports of Tymbos and Ankara. When this case came to light it was also revealed that ancient objects, also labelled "personal property" had been smuggled out too, destined for the same address.'

According to descriptions of foreign visitors and testimonies of members of the Council of Europe Commission, headed by Byzantinist Professor Robin Cormack, which came to Cyprus in 1989, not a single Byzan-

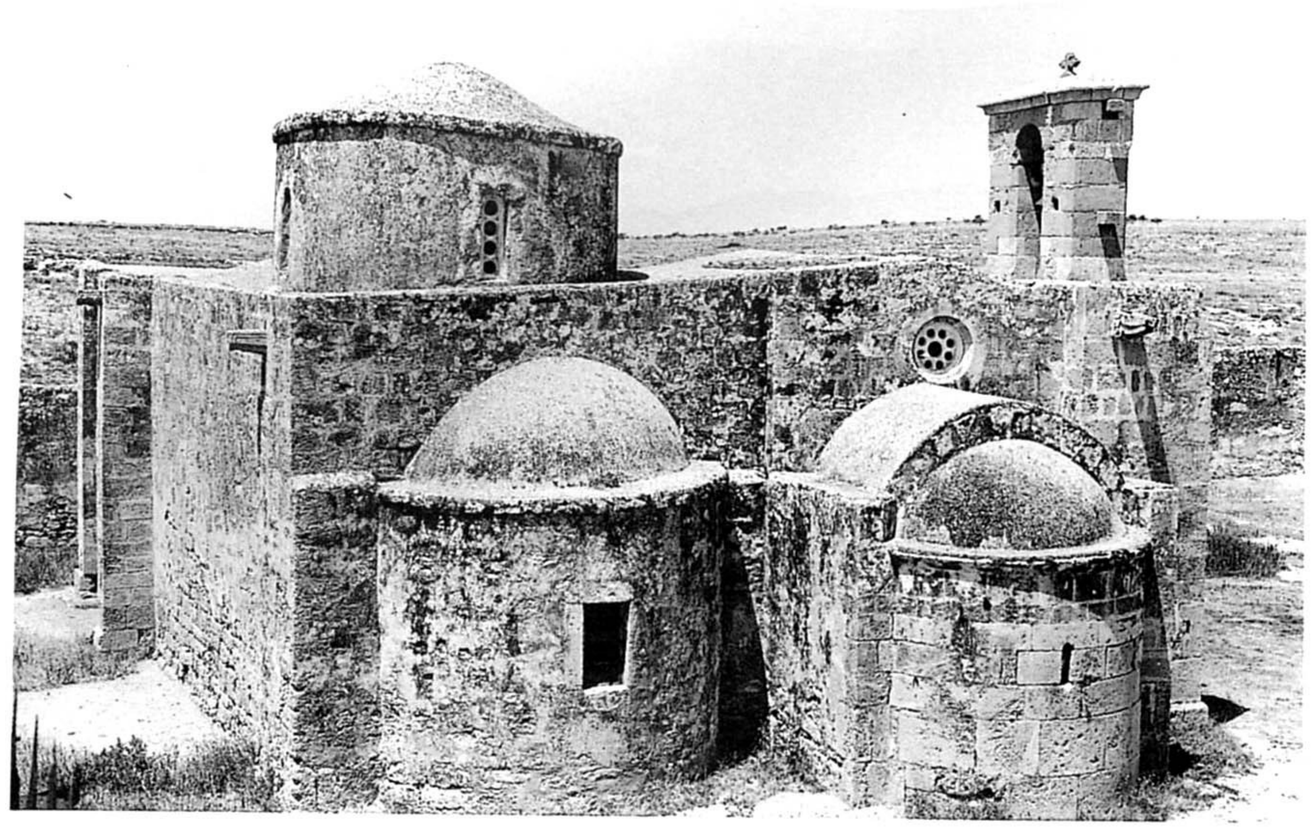


The Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis.
(From Otto Richter's illustration for John Ph. Ewer's calendars, 1822).

tine or Postbyzantine icon has remained in the Metropolis of occupied Kyrenia, the Apostle Barnabas Monastery in occupied Famagusta – it has been converted into a museum – and the church of the Archangel, near Kyrenia. In this last church the Turkish Cypriots have gathered only nineteenth- and twentieth-century icons. The Byzantine and Postbyzantine icons have vanished! 'Almost certainly those that were not well known have been sold at auctions. Those that were well known were sold directly to private individuals in order to avoid publicity and recognition', says Cypriot Byzantinist Dr A. Papageorgiou. 'Some of the holy vessels and precious silver objects in the churches were sold and others seem to have been melted down. All in all, nothing has remained. From what foreign visitors say, the churches are bare.'

When the sources of portable objects began to dry up, the removal of wall-paintings and mural mosaics began. The aim of this was not only profit but also to eradicate all traces of cultural heritage that bore witness to the ethnic identity of the occupied territory. Those wall-paintings that had been cleaned and conserved by the Archaeological Service of Cyprus before the 1974 invasion were removed. Those that could not be removed were destroyed.

Icon of Archangel Michael, from the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis.
12th century. The work has been stolen and its whereabouts are unknown.



The church of the Virgin Avgasida Monastery at Milia, Famagusta.
14th century. The wall-paintings were removed or
destroyed when it was demolished completely to lay a road.

Christ Pantocrator and angels, in the dome of the church of the Virgin Avgasida Monastery.
The wall-painting as it was before the Turkish invasion.

Saint Mamas.
Wall-painting in the
homonymous church
in the village
of Gaidouria.
The church was used as
a sheep fold after the
1974 invasion.

Detail of the woodcarved iconostasis in the katholikon of the Acheiropoietos Monastery at Lambousa Karavas.
The church and the monastery are used as barracks.

The scale of the destruction is truly unbelievable. Pieces of wall-paintings are turning up all the time in markets and antique shops all over Europe. How is it possible for works of art violently removed from Cypriot churches to be sold freely in allied countries without a word of protest from the sister Churches? Even Turkish Cypriot newspapers have pointed this out, because the potentially exploitable monuments in their supposed 'state' are being robbed.

In 1989 Turkish troops totally demolished the church in the Virgin Avgasida Monastery, after they had first detached its wall-paintings. Wall-paintings are known to have been removed from the churches of the Virgin Apsithiotissa, Saint Nicholas, Saint Solomone (8th century) at Komi tou Yalou, from Saint Philon at Agridia (12th century) and from the Virgin Afentrika. The wall-painting of Saint Anne praying and twelfth- or thirteenth-century wall-paintings of saints have also been looted from the church of the Virgin Pergaminiotissa. Unknown is the fate of the wall-paintings from the Acheiropoietos at Karavas, which is now a barracks, from the rock-hewn church of the Virgin Galakterousa, from the churches of Saint Eudokia and Saint George at Kapouti; they are known to have been removed but their whereabouts are a mystery. The fate of the wall-paintings in various churches in old Famagusta, Orthodox and Catholic, is likewise unknown.

There is reliable information that the very very important wall-paintings from the chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis have been destroyed. The church of Christ Antiphonetes, the walls of which were covered with paintings of exquisite art, has been irreparably damaged. The face of the archangel (12th century) in the apse of the holy bema was destroyed. The body is said to be still *in situ*. Fifteenth-century wall-paintings such as the Root of Jesse and the Second Coming were detached. The iconostasis of the Antiphonetes church was burnt and the icons that adorned it sold. Four icons of the apostles, from the Deesis on the iconostasis, were sold in Holland. The Church of Cyprus is proceeding through legal channels to secure their return. An icon of the Virgin and Child was sold in London to a Greek collector. It was confiscated when he brought it to the Byzantine Museum in

Tremetousia, birthplace of Saint Spyridon, is now in Turkish-held territory. The monastery and church named after the saint date from the 18th century, although the latter is built on the ruins of a late 4th-century Early Christian basilica. The Archbishopric of Cyprus had gathered more than 150 icons and priceless codices here for conservation. The laboratory was ransacked and all the Byzantine *keimelia* were plundered.
The fate of the saint's coffin is unknown (his relic is in Corfu). The monastery is used as a barracks.

Wall-painting in the rock-hewn church of the Virgin Galakterousa at Karavas. Wall-paintings of Christ and the Virgin Stazousa.

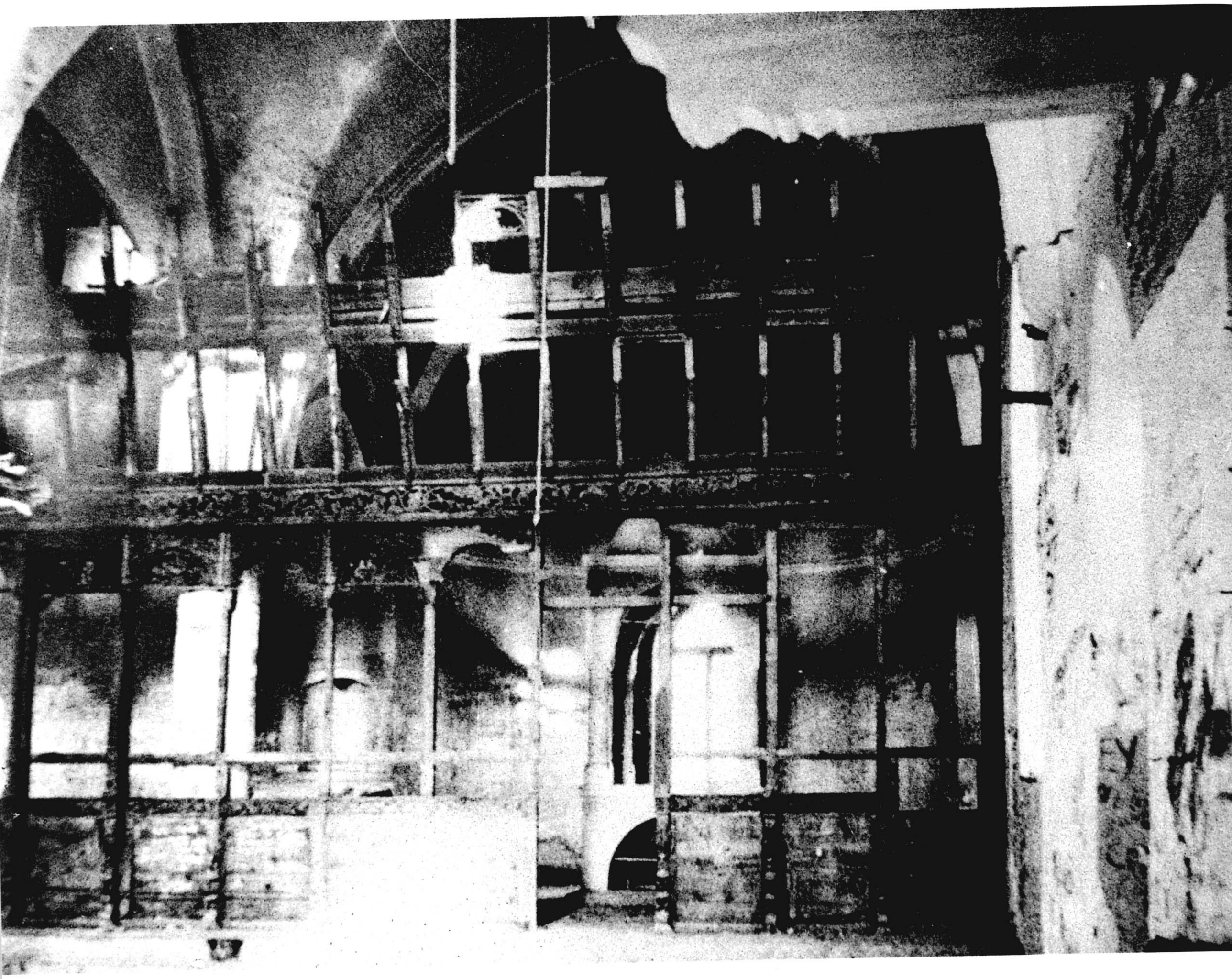
The church of the Virgin Hypate, near the village of Ayios Amvrosios. Photograph of the remains of the monument's interior after it was vandalized by the occupation forces.

Athens for conservation. The work, which had been published in the catalogue *Cyprus: The plundering of a 9000 year-old civilization*, was recognized by the then Director of the Byzantine Museum and member of the Committee, Dr Myrtali Acheimastou-Potamianou. It was repatriated in September 1998.

In 1979 the mural mosaics of unique art and iconographic importance were torn by desecrating hands from the church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi, a rare example of sixth-century architecture. The Russian Byzantinist N. Kondakov had named the special type of the Virgin in the Kanakaria mosaics the 'Cypriot type' and gave the Virgin the epithet 'Cypria'. When news of the destruction reached Nicosia in 1979, the Department of Antiquities sent a foreigner to the church to check whether it was correct. The church had indeed been stripped completely of its wonderful decoration. He picked up a few tesserae from the ground and brought them to the Archaeological Museum in Nicosia. A handful of tesserae was all that remained of this monument's art and history.

Pieces of the mosaic showing the Virgin enthroned with the Christ-Child, Archangel Michael and medallions with figures of the apostles were dispersed in the illegal markets of America and Europe. Four pieces of the Kanakaria mosaics were located in Indianapolis in 1988, between Turkish and Dutch antiquities thieves. After a trial that attracted world attention, they were reverently placed in the Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation in 1991, as Cypriots with eyes filled with tears of pain, joy and hope joined Archbishop Chrysostomos in singing the hymn to *The Hypermachos*. Two medallions had been returned earlier, in 1983, via Germany. In September and October 1997 the German Police found another two in Munich, in the home of the Turkish antiquities smuggler Aydin Dikmen. Unfortunately four medallions with figures of the apostles have yet to be located.

The wall-paintings from the apse and vault of the chapel of Saint Themonianos at Lysi were removed and sold in 38 pieces by the same nefarious Aydin Dikmen, to the Menil Foundation in Houston Texas. With the consent of His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus Chrysostomos, the Menil Foundation built a small chapel-



Church of Saint Andronikos Kythrea. The remains of the plundered iconostasis.

museum in Houston, in which the restored wall-paintings are installed, and has promised to return them to Cyprus fifteen years from now.

At the latest count some 41 churches in Turkish-held Cyprus have been converted into Muslim mosques since the invasion. At least 38 churches and other ecclesiastical foundations have been turned into hospices, museums, stables, entertainment centres, cinemas, barracks or stores for ammunitions and other equipment of the Turkish army of occupation. At Komi Kepir in the Karpass peninsula the church of Saint Auxentios is now used as a public lavatory. A large number of churches has been burgled and icons stolen. Some have been pulled down in order to widen roads. Many have been used as building material by the inhabitants of the area. Cemeteries have been desecrated, used as sheep pens and as a source of building material.

Dozens of Byzantine and Postbyzantine churches of inestimable value, as well as more recent churches, have been destroyed, plundered and their archaeological treasures exported from Cyprus. The authorities' blatant lack of respect for the religious and cultural heritage of Cyprus continues.

Twenty-four years after the Turkish invasion the Cypriot government and the Church of Cyprus still struggle to locate and repatriate

the cultural goods of the Cypriot people. All over the world, wherever there are suspicions or indications that stolen Cypriot antiquities exist, a battle is waged to bring them home. Undaunted by the enormous difficulties, the cliques of smugglers and dealers that ask astronomical sums to hand them over, they are led by the faith that the the struggle for the salvation of the 9000 year-old cultural heritage is a struggle for the national identity of the Cypriots and their survival as a historical people.

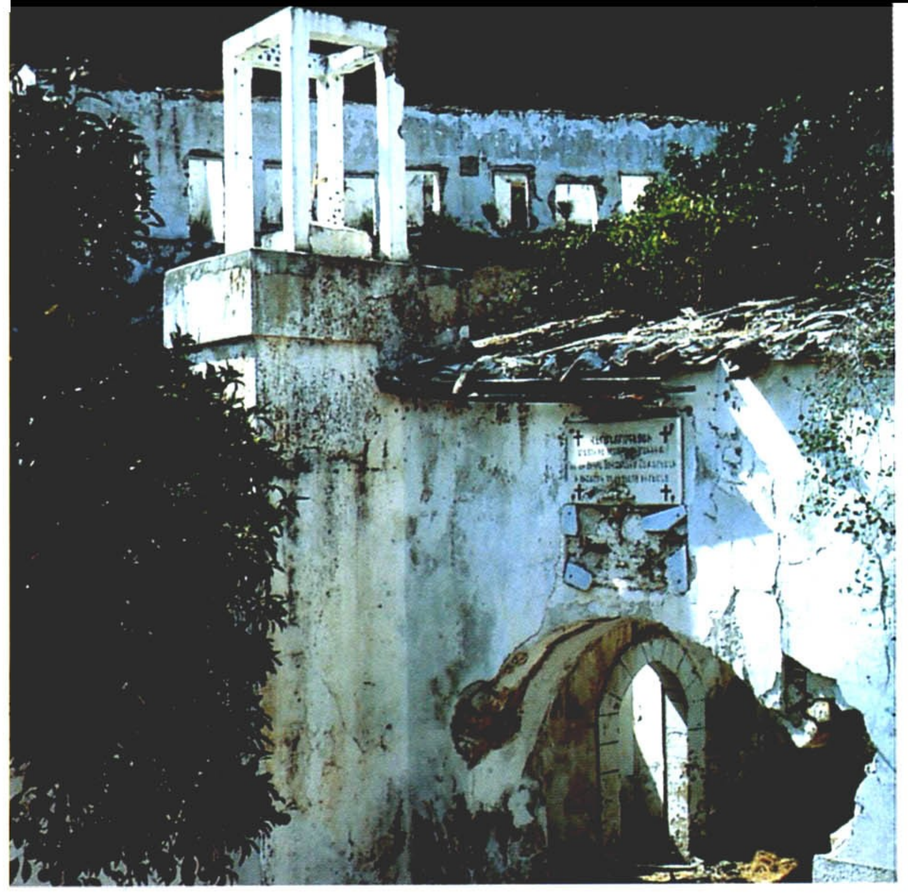
It is an open secret that in Turkish-held Cyprus antiquities thieves and antique dealers act with the connivance of Turkey and the 'pseudo-state' declared by Raouf Denktash. Here antiquities are not stolen by persons or gangs as in other states with a rich cultural heritage. Here an official state, Turkey, plunders and detains the cultural treasures of another state, Cyprus, which it occupies illegally through force.

A regime of military occupation *casus belli* has been established in the northern part of the Republic of Cyprus, which has been occupied by the Turkish army since the 1974 invasion. However, Greek Cyprus has never ceased to exist and to be a sovereign state. So the territory now occupied by the Turks, who are temporary possessors, belongs to the Republic of Cyprus. Under the terms of the Hague Convention the obligations of a signatory state towards the cultural heritage and treasures of an occupied state are clearly defined.

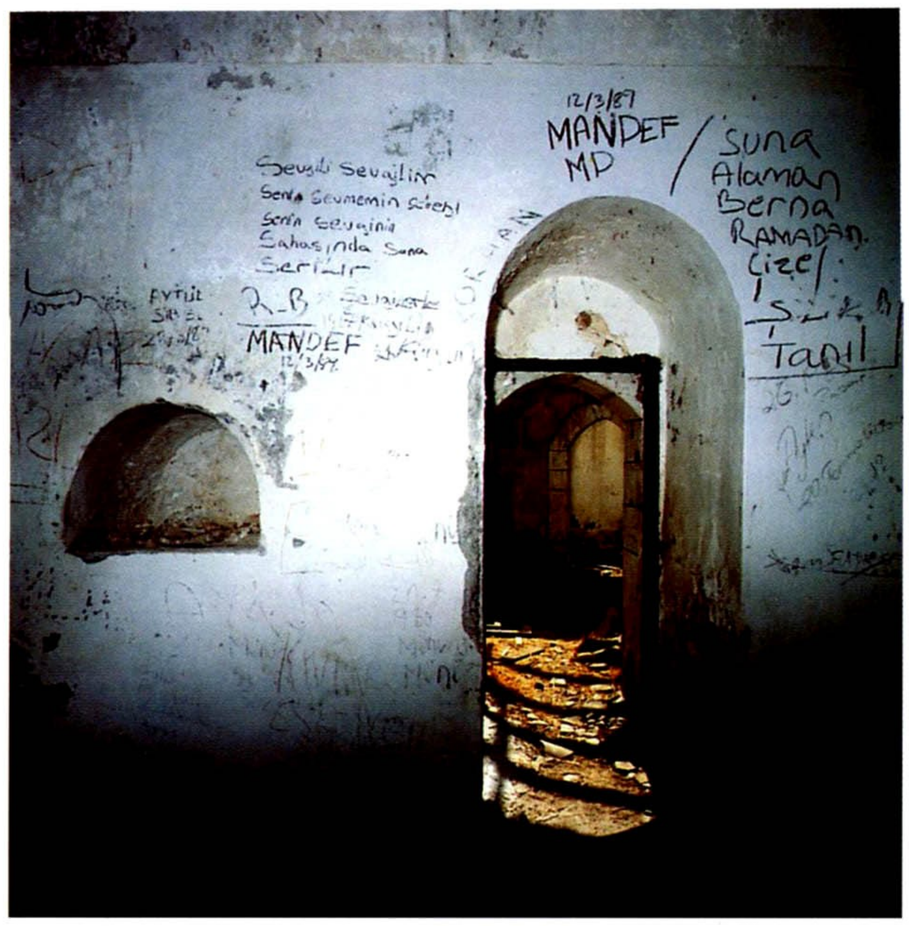
In this case both Greece and Turkey are high contracting parties to the Hague Convention of 1954, and thus should be committed to observing its terms faithfully. Consequently the non-application of the Convention is considered a contravention of International Law. The pressure of the other high contracting parties on Turkey, in the face of the systematic destruction of the cultural tradition of Greek Cyprus, is nil.

We appeal to every Greek, to every civilized person anywhere in the world, to raise his/her voice in global protest and condemnation. Civilization belongs to us all.

What is being plundered in Cyprus today does not belong to the Cypriots alone, it belongs to us all. It is time we shouldered our responsiblities.



The Armenomonastero is one of the most important places of pilgrimage for the Armenians in Cyprus. Founded in the 11th century, the present complex was built in 1811.



The lamentable state of the Armenomonastero today is due to its abandoment in 1974 and subsequent acts of vandalism.

The Virgin Tochnion dates from the late 12th century. The wall-paintings have been destroyed and looted, the bell-tower has been demolished and the icons stolen. The now empty and deserted church and monastery are used as sheep pens.

The church of the Virgin Chryseleousa in the village of Sysklipos.
The interior is used as a barn for storing bales of fodder.

The cemetery in the village of Thermia, after desecration by the Turks.
This is the state of almost all the Christian cemeteries in the occupied regions of Cyprus.

The church of Saint Nicholas in the village of Elias. View of the pillaged interior.

Assia. The village cemetery with opened graves, broken crosses and capstones.

Limestone female head from the temple of Aphrodite at Idalion.
The influence of Ionian art is obvious
in Cypriot sculpture of the early 5th century BC.

Cyprus

The Coming of the Greeks

Vassos Karageorghis
Academician

The chapter 'Cyprus, The coming of the Greeks' is reprinted from the collective volume *Cyprus Between East and West, A Political and Moral Dilemma: The Past as Prologue to the Present* (ed. Spyros Vryonis, Jr.), New York, The Alexander Onassis Center for Hellenic Studies, Crete University Press, Herakleion 1994, 11-14.

Mycenaean IIIA amphoroid krater.
The schematic octopus decoration covering
almost the entire surface of the vase is one of
the most popular motifs in Aegean art. 14th century BC.

Terracotta centaur figurine.
6th century BC.

For over three thousand years the island of Cyprus, situated in the Eastern Mediterranean and surrounded by the great ancient civilizations of Anatolia, the Levant and Egypt, pursued a different political and cultural course from that of its neighbours, drawing closer to the Greek rather than the Oriental sphere. The reasons for this paradox are to be found in the island's history and archaeology. This brief account of the cultural and political evolution of the Cypriots focuses on their relations with the Greek world in particular and aims to shed light from the past on the political problems which the island faces today.

When countries which have been under the domination of other nations, whether in antiquity or in a less remote past, are free of the 'colonial' yoke, a cultural-economic link is usually retained which fades away with time. Cyprus is a case in point, both in antiquity and in modern times. Political domination of the island by the Assyrians, the Persians, the Romans, the Lusignans, the Ottomans and the British, for example, left 'monuments' of the rulers' passage but did not alter the basic ethnic or cultural character of the indigenous population. Why then did the Greek presence on the island change the identity of the Cypriots so radically?

Cyprus has been inhabited for some ten thousand years. From the Neolithic and through to the Bronze Age it developed lively, independent prehistoric cultures without major influences from neighbouring countries. This separate development resulted from the island's insular character.

From the mid-second millennium BC serious changes occurred in the Mediterranean region. The relative isolation which had prevailed during previous periods was broken and a period of lively interrelations began. The Egyptians established a *pax aegyptica* in the Eastern Mediterranean while the Mycenaeans became the dominant political power in the Aegean, having succeeded the Minoans of Crete. They were aware that the material resources of the Aegean were limited and trade with other countries, particularly those of the Eastern Mediterranean and Egypt, flourished.

Cyprus held a special attraction for the Mycenaeans, not only because of its geographical position which provided easy access to neighbouring markets, but mainly because of the island's rich copper resources. The Mycenaeans required copper for vessels and weapons, and the Cypriots could provide ample quantitites of this commodity, which was as important in antiquity as oil is today. Mycenaean ships often called at the harbour towns along the south and east coasts of the island to unload goods – fine pottery or other exotic products which they had acquired from other countries by exchange – and to take on board copper ingots. The discovery of a Mycenaean shipwreck off the southwest coast of Turkey, which was loaded with Cypriot ingots – more than two hundred have been recovered so far from the sea bed – is a clear indication of the importance of Cypriot copper in 'international trade'. The ship's cargo

Clay boat model from Kazaphani (Kyrenia area).
Late Bronze Age.

also contained ingots of glass and tin, Mycenaean pottery, bronzes, seals and Cypriot pottery etc. The excavators date the shipwreck to *circa* 1300 BC.

Reference to Cypriot copper is made in the correspondence between the Pharaoh of Egypt and the King of Alasia (the prehistoric name of Cyprus) on clay tablets found in the palace of Tell el-Amarna in Egypt and dating to the early part of the eighteenth century BC. Though the exchange of gifts among kings must have been widespread in the Late Bronze Age, it would not have diminished the importance and volume of trade through entrepreneurs. The effects of trade with the Mycenaeans on Cyprus were not only the accumulation of material wealth – as illustrated by the rich tomb gifts that accompanied Cypriot burials – but also the adoption by local craftsmen of the Mycenaean art styles. Some Mycenaean artists may have followed the merchants and settled in Cyprus, and there may even have been an exchange of craftsmen among the various courts of the Levant and the Aegean, a phenomenon which certainly did take place but which is rarely taken into account in the study of the development of artistic styles of 'international' character. In pottery, glyptics, jewellery, ivory-carving and bronzework, Mycenaean styles and techniques were adopted and a 'mixed' style with local Cypriot and Aegean elements appeared as a healthy development of East Mediterranean art during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC.

The strong 'empire' of the Mycenaeans, which was based on a central palace administration of the various Mycenaean rulers, started declining rapidly *circa* 1200 BC, after the destruction (probably by earthquake) of Mycenae and Tiryns in the Peloponnese. Overseas trade was seriously disrupted and the palace system collapsed. Following these events a massive emigration of Mycenaeans to the Dodecanese, Rhodes and Asia Minor took place. Troy was destroyed and reference is made in the Near Eastern literature and inscriptions to the activities of the 'Peoples of the Sea', who brought chaos to the Eastern Mediterranean. Egyptian records mention

The ruins of ancient Kition on the south coast of Cyprus lie on the site of modern Larnaca. The arrival of the first Achaean settlers here, as at Enkomi, in the late 13th century BC, brought radical changes in the city's plan and the way of life of its inhabitants. The brick-built enceinte was replaced by a mighty Cyclopean wall, very similar to that at Enkomi. 13th century BC.

The name Opheltes incised on a bronce *obelos*.
This is the earliest inscription in the Greek language
but written in Cypriot syllabary. Found at Palaepaphos.
11th century BC.

seven races, among whom several seem to have come from the Aegean region.

The documented political turmoil caused by the 'Sea Peoples' has been confirmed by archaeological discoveries both in Cyprus and the Levant. In Syria the large cosmpolitan town of Ugarit, with which Cyprus had close connections during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC, was destroyed by fire and abandoned. Other Late Bronze Age towns in Syria and Palestine suffered a similar fate, although some of them, like Ras Ibn Hani in Syria and Ekron in Palestine, were rebuilt by a new population which, according to the excavators, was of Achaean (Mycenaean) origin and introduced distinctive architectural and artistic styles. In Cyprus, over a period of about fifty years, flourishing towns were abandoned – like Kalavassos-Ayios Dimitrios and Maroni-Vournes near the south coast. Military outposts were established in remote places, such as Pyla-Kokkinokremmos near the southeast coast and Maa-Paleokastro on the west coast; cities like Enkomi near the east coast were destroyed and others, like Kition on the southeast coast, were rebuilt. Such events did not occur overnight, but spread over several decades, from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the twelfth century BC. During that time several novelties became apparent in the material culture and religious beliefs of the Cypriots, including the introduction of architectural styles unknown to the island before, e.g. 'Cyclopean' defensive walls and large hearth-rooms in domestic architecture, new styles in pottery and weaponry etc. Comparable phenomena occur at various sites in the Levant. A new religious symbol – the 'horns of consecration', of purely Aegean origin – appears at several sacred places on the island, including Enkomi, Palaepaphos and Kition.

The settlement of newcomers among the native population of Cyprus could not have been straightforward, nevertheless there was a cultural continuity inasmuch as there was no shifting of their cities or cemeteries. This continuity came to an end

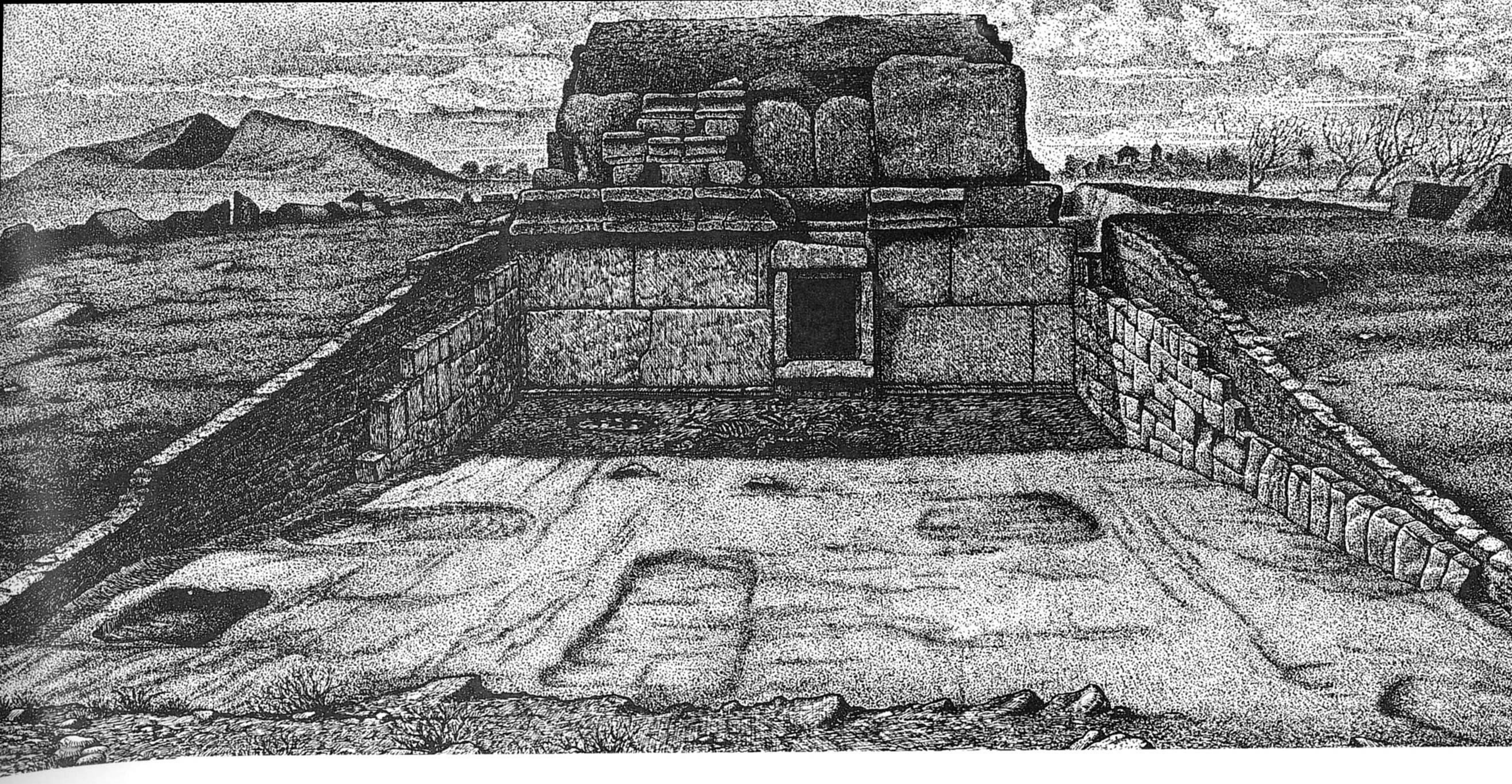
Gold royal sceptre with
cloisonné enamel finial.
From Curium. 11th century BC.

Silver cup with bucrania motifs, inlaid in gold and niello.
Both the shape of the vase and the technique of decoration recall a similar cup found in the tholos tomb at Dendra in the Peloponnese. The cup from Enkomi was found in a grave of the 14th century BC.

Mycenaean IIIA amphoroid krater from Enkomi.
In the zone between the vertical handles are representations of bulls and human figures, popular subjects in Mycenaean vase-painting.
Early 14th century BC.

Copper talent (oxhide ingot) with a sign of Cypro-Minoan script.
From Enkomi. Late Bronze Age (1400-1200 BC).

Bronze statuette of a god with horned helmet.
Found in the shrine at Enkomi.
Late Cypriot III period (12th century BC).



Although most of the royal tombs in the necropolis of Salamis had been robbed, they nevertheless bear witness to the ascendancy and prosperity of Cyprus during the 7th and 6th centuries BC.

circa 1100 BC, after about one century of cohabitation, and may have coincided with the arrival of a new wave of Achaean immigrants from the Aegean, who introduced new cultural ideas, e.g. artistic styles, a Mycenaean type of funerary architecture and a 'goddess' who is usually known as the 'goddess with uplifted arms' and is mainly associated with Minoan Crete.

In the Levant the Mycenaean element was soon absorbed by the local population, but in Cyprus it was reinforced and by *circa* 1100 BC the Mycenaean elite was strong enough to build new cities in which they held political control. These are the cities referred to in mythical tradition as having been founded by Greek heroes after the end of the Trojan War. The old towns, like Curium and Enkomi, were abandoned and replaced by new foundations (Kaloriziki and Salamis respectively). The new towns flourished as a result of continued trade with the Levant and no doubt by retaining contacts with the Aegean. Poverty and illiteracy, which were characteristic of the so-called 'Dark Ages' in the Aegean, were unknown in Cyprus where, in contrast, the new towns were quite wealthy, as tomb evidence from Palaepaphos and Salamis demonstrates. In and eleventh-century BC tomb excavated at Palaepaphos a bronze *obelos* (spit) was found on which a Greek proper name in the genitive case is engraved in the Cypriot syllabary: of Opheltes. This is the earliest evidence so far for the use of the Greek language in Cyprus. The genitive form of Opheltes is peculiar to the Arcadian dialect and points to the origin of the early Greeks who settled at Palaepaphos. Mythical tradition mentions Agapenor as the founder of Paphos; Agapenor was King of the Arcadians in the Trojan War.

This short and simple account of the events associated with the arrival and settlement of the first Greeks in Cyprus may serve as a historical background to the 'Cyprus problem'.

Cyprus

Historical - Archaeological Review from Prehistoric Times till the Roman Age

Maria Iakovou
Associate Professor, University of Cyprus

Limestone female head with influences from the style of the 4th-century BC sculptor Scopas. From Arsos. 3rd century BC.

Map of Cyprus showing the main archaeological sites.

Clay vase from the cemetery at Vounoi. Two antithetic modelled doves adorn the rim. Found together with other grave goods. Early Bronze Age.

Introduction

Organized archaeological research in Cyprus dates back to the early years of British rule, with the founding of the Cyprus Museum in 1882, and was placed on firm legal and scientific bases with the passing of the Law on Antiquities in 1935 and the concurrent establishment of the Department of Antiquities. In 1973 fifteen excavations were conducted by foreign missions in Cyprus and another five by the Republic's Department of Antiquities. Excavation programmes over decades, study of the material and publication of the results by a host of archaeologists of international repute from all over the world, had documented – long before the Turkish invasion in 1974 – the successive cultural horizons of Cyprus from the Neolithic Age of the seventh millennium BC onwards.

These manifestations of an integral culture, in no way extensions of the cultures of the Near East, are located throughout the island. So from the Neolithic Age onwards, at no moment in prehistoric or historical times was there a cultural horizon specific to just one geographical area of Cyprus. The single *Cypriot character*, of the island's history and cultural achievements was never partitioned by an artificial divide before 1974. Only today is the occupation regime imposed by military force trying to fabricate a fictitious culture in the northern part of the island, by expelling the indigenous population and changing age-old Hellenic place names.

The Turkish invasion and occupation in July 1974 dealt a decisive blow to the uniform development of Cypriot archaeology. Over twenty years on, and while organized missions continue to work in free Cyprus and to publicize their discoveries internationally, medieval obscurantism prevails in the occupied sector and archaeological crime is rife (sale of archaeological treasures, looting of museums and private collections, total destruction of sites and neglect of excavated monuments).

Kyrenia-Troulli. The Neolithic settlement.

Prehistory

Neolithic Age (7000 BC) to Late Bronze Age (1200 BC)

During the 1920s the Swedish Archaeological Mission excavated the islet of Petra tou Limniti in the bay of Morphou, now in the Turkish-occupied part of the island, bringing to light the first evidence of a Cypriot Neolithic culture. In 1941 the then Ephor of the Cyprus Museum, Porphyrios Dikaios, recognized this pre-pottery period of the Neolithic Age at Troulli, west of the Kyrenia coast, and in the 1970s the mission of the CNRS of France noted its existence in the Neolithic fishing village of Apostolos Andreas Kastros in the Karpass peninsula. The pre-pottery Neolithic settlements in the occupied sector are inextricably bound with their counterparts in the free regions (Khirokitia and Kalavassos-Tenta), from which they have been cut off.

Ayios Epiktitos-Vrysi in Kyrenia (which no longer exists because it was transformed into a modern village after the invasion) and Philia-Drakos on the river Ovgos plain (west), two Neolithic settlements which, like Sotira in free Cyprus, document the first appearance of pottery in the Late Neolithic period (*c.* 4300 BC), were investigated by teams from British universities before 1974.

The same violent anti-scientific partition applies to all the cultural phases and is a hybris against intellectual toil, not to mention the enormous academic and economic contribution of European, Australian and American universities and research institutes to the study of Cypriot civilization.

Cyprus passed smoothly from the Late Neolithic period to the Chalcolithic, and then to the Early Bronze Age. At Ambelikou in the bay of Morphou, and neighbouring Philia, there was continuous development from the Chalcolithic to the Early Bronze Age. Ambelikou is one of the first settlements founded because of the nearby copper lodes, inaugurating a new economy: of metallurgy and copper production. It is in precisely this part of occupied Kyrenia and the western plain of Morphou that Swedish (Lapithos), Australian (Vasilia), British (Vounoi) and Cypriot archaeologists (Ambelikou, Philia, Vounoi) found evidence of the cultural revolution hidden behind the dry terminology of the Early Bronze Age. A period attested primarily by the unprecedented wealth of grave goods from the cemeteries in the now occupied part of Cyprus.

In the Middle Bronze Age (1900-1600 BC) Lapithos appeared as the most important settlement on the north coast (possibly as a harbour for the copper trade). In parallel however, the hitherto sparsely populated eastern part of the island developed rapidly, on

account of its proximity to the Near Eastern littoral zone, which was the first recipient of the precious ore.

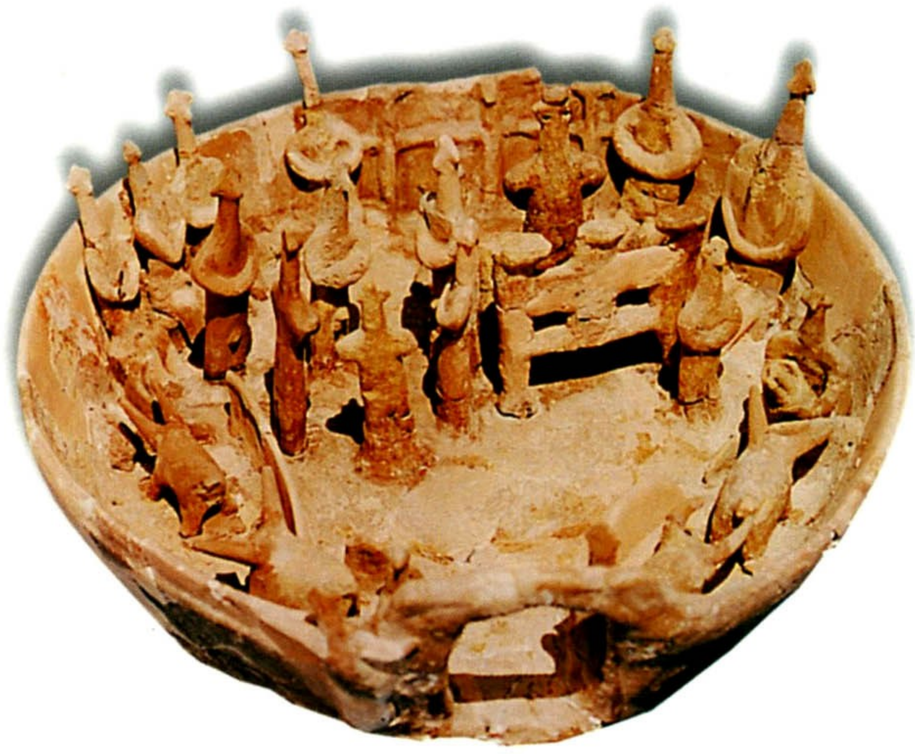
During the transitional phase from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age (1650/1550 BC) Cyprus emerged from isolation.

Apart from the increasing presence of objects imported from Crete, the Cyclades and Asia Minor, Cypriot pottery began to appear in Syria, Palestine, Egypt, following the routes along which copper was traded. At this time Kalopsida was capital of the eastern plain, trading with the Near East out of the harbour of the newly founded town of Enkomi until the end of the Middle Bronze Age. Then both Kalopsida and Lapithos went into decline and Enkomi came into its own as a commercial centre.

So in the early sixteenth century BC, that is the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, a stronghold that was later converted into a copper-smelting installation, became the founding cell of Enkomi, the large urban centre with building insulae, which was destined to determine the course of prehistoric Cyprus for some five hundred years, from the sixteenth till the early eleventh century BC. The Department of Antiquities, under its director Porphyrios Dikaios, explored this vast town for a decade (1948-1958), while the French Mission to Enkomi, set up by Claude Schaffer in 1947, continued investigations until the summer of 1974.

The export of copper entailed an international economy, which stimulated the development of towns, that is the urbanization of prehistoric Cyprus. A new era dawned in the island's hinterland, decisive for the growth of coastal cities through which copper was traded. These were the conditions in which not only Enkomi but also Morphou and Ayia Irini were founded, to mention only those ports now in the occupied sector.

The excavations by the Italians at Ayia Irini and by Harvard University at nearby Toumba tou Skourou, yielded an unprecedented concentration of Minoan vases (1527-1475 BC), which obviously reached the western shores of Cyprus in the same period as the Cypro-Minoan script appeared. This prehistoric system of writing, like the Minoan Linear A script to which it is akin, has not yet been deciphered.

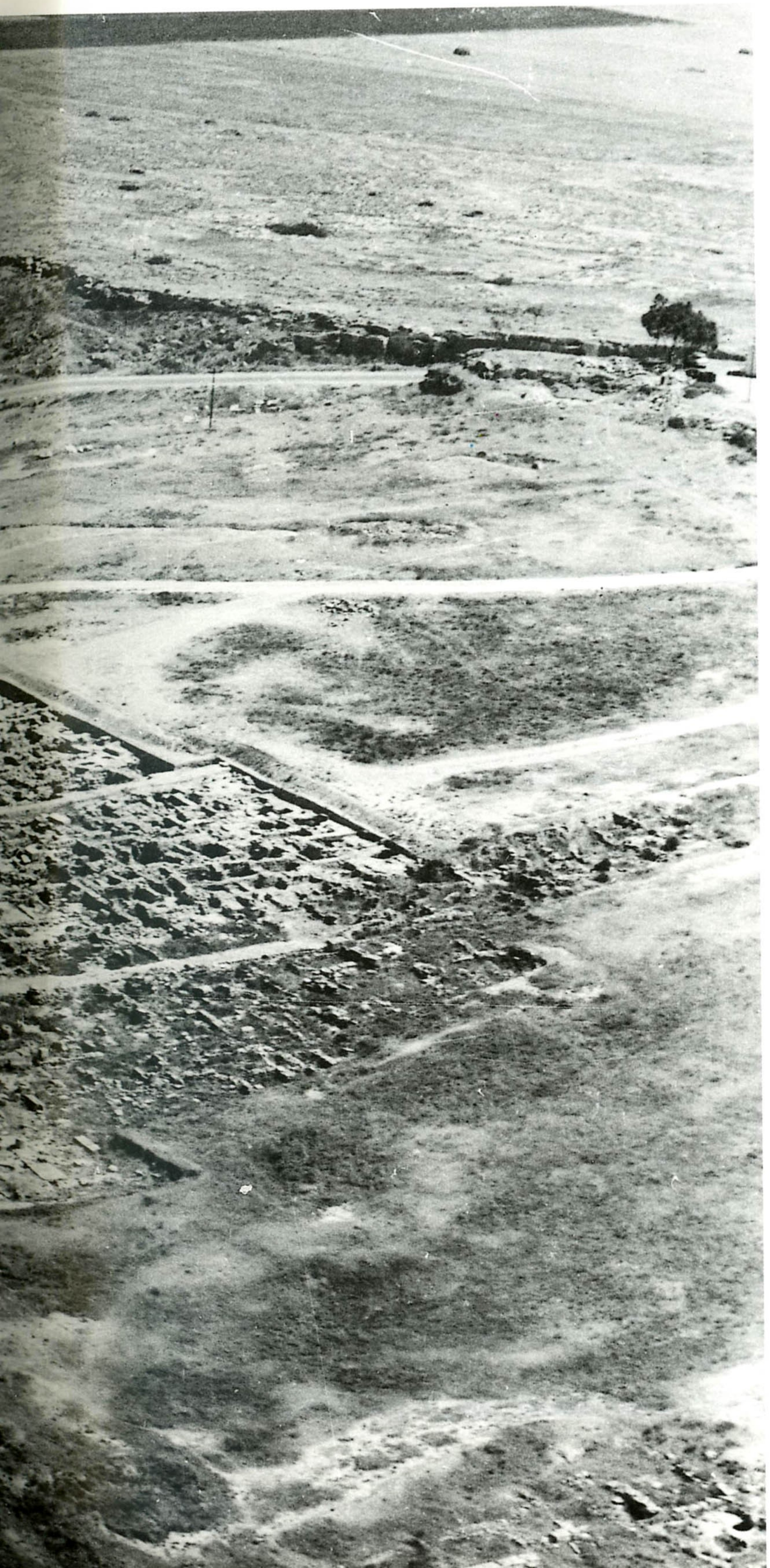


Clay model of a circular open-air shrine with human figures and a *xoanon* (cult effigy). From the cemetery at Vounoi. Early Bronze Age.

Ayios Epiktitos-Vrysi. Neolithic settlement.

Clay model of a ploughing scene. From the cemetery at Vounoi.
Early Bronze Age.

Prehistoric Enkomi.
Today an archaeological site in occupied territory.



Alasia

Inscribed cuneiform tablets of the eighteenth century BC from Alalak, and of the seventeenth century from Mari in Mesopotamia, mention an island by the name of *Alasia*, in connection with the production and export of copper.

Correspondence between the King of Alasia and Pharaoh Amenophes IV, in the fourteenth century BC, refers to a kind of tribute in copper talents paid by Alasia to Amenophes.

Today it is generally accepted that Alasia is Cyprus and, moreover, that the seat of it king was Enkomi, which controlled the export of copper ingots.

In the second phase of the Late Bronze Age (*c.* 1400 BC), after the collapse of Knossos and the domination of the Mycenaeans in the Aegean, Mycenaean IIIA pottery – pictorial-style amphoras and kraters – flooded Cyprus, while Mycenaeans set up emporia in the cosmopolitan ports, directed at the markets in the coastal zone of the Near East.

The cities reached their zenith in the thirteenth century BC, as attested by the monumental architecture and the unprecedented output of bronze objects, such as the famous Cypriot tripods and the four-legged stands *(hypothemata)* (see the example repatriated by the Leventis Foundation, p. 218).

Vase of the Cypro-Archaic I period. The Cyprus Museum.

1250-1150 BC: the traumatic century

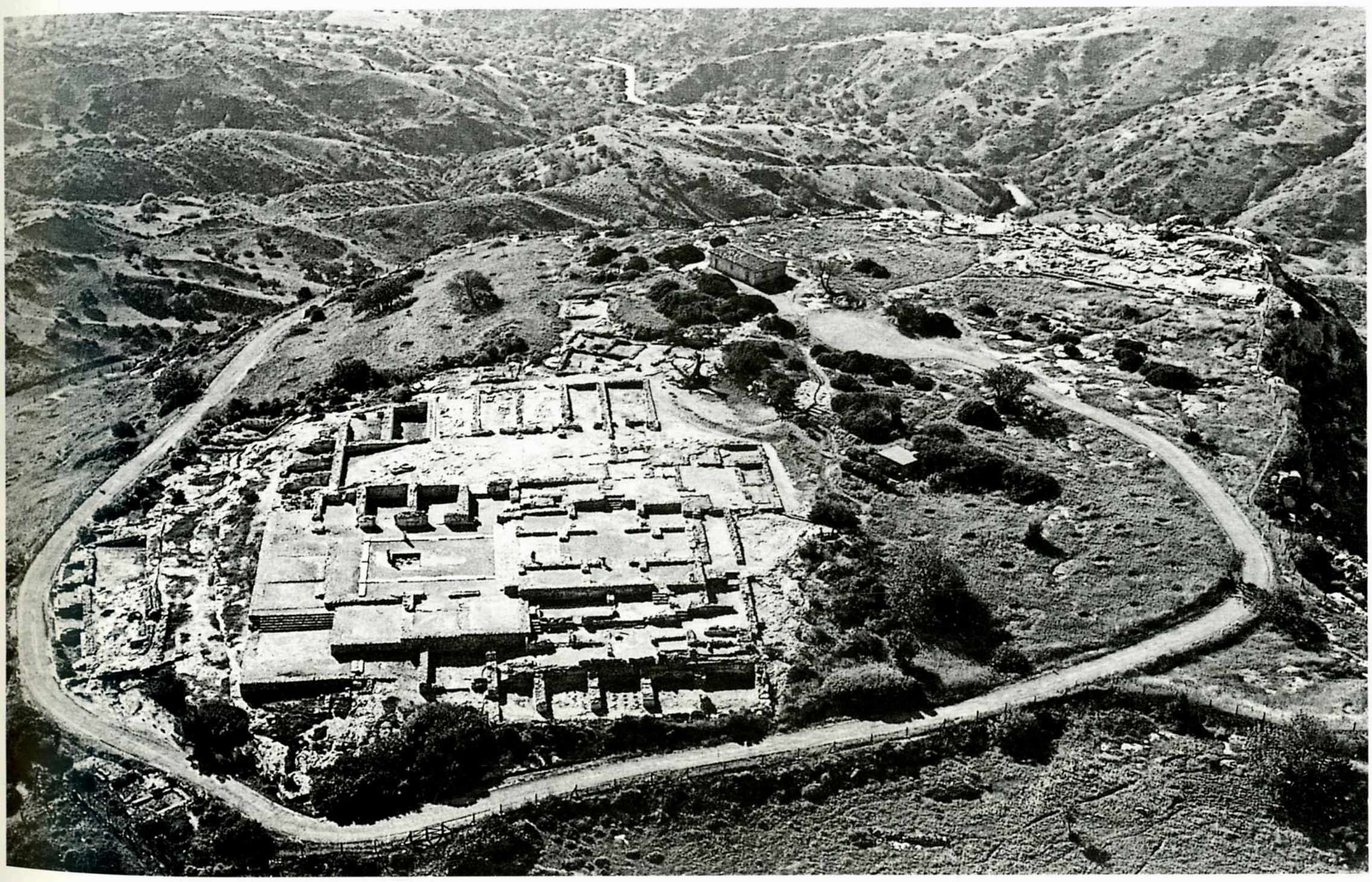
In the closing years of the thirteenth century BC the spheres of influence of the Hittites, the Egyptians and the Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean were disintegrating. The economic interdependence of these centralized regimes triggered the chain reaction of their collapse. This was the demise of the prehistoric civilizations in the Mediterranean and, of course, Cyprus. Between the late thirteenth and before the end of the twelfth century BC the island's major urban centres were destroyed or deserted. The end of the Late Bronze Age marked the end of the first exclusively 'Cypriot Culture' (analogous with the Cycladic or the Minoan Culture, which belong to a common Mediterranean prehistory).

This was a period of general upheaval and mass movement of populations in the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole, which situation only ceased when new, well-organized communities were formed. These rebuilt upon the ruins of the twelfth century BC another Mediterranean world: the world of the Iron Age.

The twelfth century is linked in legend with the descent of the Achaeans. It was in reality the difficult era of cultural antagonism and amalgamation for those incomers who settled in Cyprus in search of a new life. By the eleventh century BC the Greek-speaking element had evidently prevailed.

Vouni. Detail of the palace.

Vouni. The palace. 5th century BC. Today an archaeological site in occupied territory.



Clay tablet incised with signs of Cypro-Minoan script.
From Enkomi. *Circa* 1500 BC.

The protohistoric horizon

The 11th century BC and the mythical cities

The new settlements of the eleventh century BC are identified with the mythical cities founded in Cyprus by the heroes of the Trojan War on their return from Ilium. Nowhere else can events be followd more clearly than in the now occupied metropolises of Enkomi and Salamis. Enkomi was abandoned at the end of the twelfth century BC. The mythical founder of Salamis, Teucer, was to found a new walled city closer to the sea: *To sea-girt Cyprus, where Apollo bade. That I should dwell, and, for the homeland's sake, give it the island name of Salamis* (Euripides *Helen*, 148-150).

All the new cities are accompanied by new cemeteries, featuring the chamber tomb of overtly Mycenaean type. One of the most important innovations of the eleventh century BC, it appeared exclusively in newly established necropolises throughout Cyprus (Lapithos, Alaas) and was accompanied by the same type of rich painted pottery of the period. These changes point to the Late Mycenaean provenance of the tombs and the pottery, thus revealing the predominance of Aegean people in Cyprus.

The Greek Cypriot ethnogenesis

Consequently the earliest archaeological indications for the conscious creation of a pan-Cypriot Hellenic identity are traced back to the eleventh century BC. The term 'Greek Cypriot ethnogenesis' refers to the transformation of Cyprus from a cosmopolitan centre in the Eastern Mediterranean, inhabited by a literate prehellenic people, to a *protohistoric society* which emerged with a new homogeneous culture in the renaissance of the eleventh century BC.

Language and script

The Cypro-Minoan script, the prehellenic Cypriot syllabary, was still in use when Greek-speaking populations without their own system of writing reached Cyprus. Linear B had never became a national script; it had remained a system employed for keeping accounts and inventories in the Mycenaean palaces and disappeared in the late thirteenth century BC. In the literate society of Cyprus the Greek-speakers borrowed the existing Cypro-Minoan syllabary in order to write their language, and so the Cyprosyllabic script was born.

The development of the Greek language

Part of a clay tablet with signs of Cypro-Minoan script. From Enkomi. 13th century BC.

Terracotta votive figurines from an open-air sanctuary.
Ayia Irini. 7th century BC.

Terracotta model of a battle chariot.
From Ovgoros, district of Famagusta.
The horses have front bands and blinkers, like those found with their trappings in the *dromoi* of the royal tombs at Salamis. 6th century BC.

in Cyprus is documented through the unwieldy syllabary. It appears in 500 BC as a simple Greek dialect, immediately understandable to the users of other Greek dialects. So deeply engrained in protohistoric Cyprus was the syllabic rendering of the Greek language that the arrival and settlement of the Phoenicians in Kition, in the ninth century, and the introduction of a far superior kind of script, the alphabet, had no effect on its evolutionary course. It is characteristic of the conservatism of the Cypriot Greeks that they never considered adopting the alphabetic script, not even whem it was established in the the wider Hellenic world of the Aegean and the Greek colonies, in the eighth-seventh centuries BC. In Cyprus the syllabary continued to reign supreme, not only after the official introduction of the alphabet by Euagoras I of Salamis, in the early fourth century BC, but also during Hellenistic times when the island was a Ptolemaic province.

It would perhaps be more comprehensible historically if in the fifth century BC the Cypriots were speaking Phoenician and writing in the Phoenician alphabet. That this did not happen is due to the fact that before the arrival of the Phoenicians in the ninth century BC the Greek language and

Terracotta votive figurines found around the altar in the open-air sanctuary at Ayia Irini.
Excavated by the Swedish Archaeological Mission. 7th century BC.

Kalathos in the pictorial style. Early 11th century BC.

Salamis. The gymnasium, stadium, amphitheatre and theatre. Today an archaeological site in occupied territory.

its peculiar syllabic script were an irreversible fact.

The Iron Age

Cypro-Geometric period (1050-750 BC)

This is the period in which the political status and the geographical boundaries of the Cypriot city-kingdoms were defined. The kingdoms were founded by the direct descendants of the Greek-speaking immigrants to Cyprus from the Aegean in the twelfth century BC. This is why the founding of the Cypriot kingdoms is attributed to heroes of the Trojan War or to Greek *oikistai*: Teucer from Salamis founded Salamis, Agapenor from Arcadia founded the kingdom of Paphos, Praxander from Laconia Lapithos and Chalcanor Idalion, while Soloi was a possession 'of the Athenians Phaleros and Acamas' and Curium 'a possession of the Argeians'. Some of these myths preserve a protohistoric event while others are aetiological, that is a creation of later political propaganda.

Salamis, the earliest remains

When the Turkish invasion took place in summer 1974, the French mission of the University of Lyons was in the middle of recording the earliest levels of the founding of Salamis.

A sanctuary, a brick-built defensive wall, a very important chamber tomb are all that the French mission managed to locate of eleventh-century BC Salamis, which continues to lie buried – together with the Salamis of Cypro-Geometric times – under the monumental buildings of the Late Roman period.

The myth of the founder Teucer, brother of the Homeric hero Ajax, is commonplace in many ancient authors. Strabo cites it along with the geographical position of Salamis:

– for the passage across to Salamis is only seventy stadia. Then to the beach of the Achaeans, where Teucer, the founder of Salamis in Cypros, first landed, having been banished, as they say, by his father Telamon (*Geography* XIV, *6, 3*)

Terracotta female statue with obvious influences of Attic sculpture.
From the cemetery at Marion.
6th or 5th century BC.

... for the passage across to Salamis is only seventy stadia. Then to the beach of the Achaeans, where Teucer, the founder of Salamis in Cypros, first landed, having been banished, as they say, by his father Telamon (*Geography* XIV, 6, 3).

The 'beach of the Achaeans' (*Achaion akte*) refers to the shore where the Achaean heroes disembarked on the return from Troy. It was and still is the toponym of a specific beach on the northern coast of Cyprus, which is mentioned in the Geographical Treatise (*Hyphegesin)* by Claudius Ptolemy and appears on the earliest known maps of the island.

Limestone head of a youth.
Cypro-Archaic II period (550-500 BC)

Cypro-Archaic Period (750-475 BC)

IATNANA: The land of the Danaoi

The momentous historical event of the Cypriot kings' submission to the Assyrian monarch Sargon II (722-705 BC) is recorded in the votive stele set up on his order at Kition in 707 BC. The inscription on the Sargon stele, which was discovered at Kition in 1854 and has been in the Berlin Museum ever since, is the earliest *testimonium* of the existence of Cypriot city-kingdoms. Both in inscriptions from the palace of Sargon and in the Kition stele, Cyprus is called 'IA' (the island) and is described as a province or region of 'ATNANA' or 'IATNANA', which in cuneiform means the land or the islands of the Danaoi, that is the Greeks. So the Assyrians in the eighth century BC speak of Cyprus as the island *par excellence* of the Greeks. In 707 BC the kingdoms of Cyprus passed from independence to vassalage, first to the Assyrians (*c.* 707-669 BC), next to the Egyptians (570-545 BC) and then to the Persians, until Alexander the Great arrived in the Eastern Mediterranean basin (*c.* 545-333 BC), to be dissolved in the end by Ptolemy I Soter between 312 and 310 BC, when the island became an eparchy in the realm of the Egyptian ptolemies. In 58 BC Cyprus became a Roman province and so remained until the division of the Roman Empire in the fourth century AD. In AD 395 it was subject officially to the Eastern Roman Empire: Byzantium.

It seems from the ancient literary sources that the number of kingdoms fluctuated. According to Diodorus Siculus (1st century BC), there were nine kingdoms in the mid-fourth century BC: Lapithos, Kyrenia, Marion, Salamis, Kition, Amathous, Curium, Paphos and Soloi. The Turkish invasion of 1974 brought the investigation of the city-kingdoms to a halt in half of Cyprus. With the exception of the unfinished work at Salamis and the sporadic research at Soloi, we are still in the dark regarding the archaeological documentation of the kingdoms of Lapithos, Chytroi, Golgoi, Kyrenia and, in part, of half-occupied Idalion. The result is tragic for the history of Cyprus, because in the free regions the kingdoms of Kition, Amathous, Curium, Palaepaphos and Marion are being excavated with every possible care. On account of this anomaly, which prevents archaeological exploration of the kingdoms in the occupied region, the Archaic and Classical periods in Cyprus are outlined below through the history of Salamis, in conjunction with the texts.

The royal necropolis of Salamis

The beginning of Assyrian domination (late 8th century BC) is contemporary with the founding of the 'royal necropolis' of Salamis in the Cypro-Archaic period. The royal necropolis is distinguished by a monumental display of power, combined with the mythical riches of the East. Although the palaces of rulers of the period have not been found, their tombs bear witness to the inordinate wealth, opulence and omnipotence of the royal families, those who were linked by tradition with the founding of the eleventh-century BC cities. The royal tombs of Salamis are a kind of political propaganda which contributed to the consolidation of regal pre-eminence.

At the end of the eighth century BC there was a remarkable revival of Homeric burial

Ivory winged sphinx wearing the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt.
From the side of the throne found in the royal tomb at Salamis. Late 8th century BC.

customs. It is not fortuitous that the *Cypriot Epics,* which are ascribed to Stasinos, belong traditionally to this period. In contrast to the Aegean, cremation of the dead was an extremely rare phenomenon in Cyprus, and yet in Tomb 1 at Salamis 27 Attic-Euboean Middle Geometric vases accompanied the burial of a cremated female.

Her ashes, wrapped in cloth, were found in a bronze cauldron, while the remains of the funerary pyre were found in the dromos of the tomb, where the horses that had drawn her corpse had been sacrificed. This is very close to Homer's description of Patrocles' burial, in the *Iliad*.

Similarly 'Patroclean' is the burial of a warrior (Tomb 3), dated to the seventh century BC. Beside his battle chariot, his completely Homeric weapons were found: shield, javelin, bow and quiver, and most important of all, the 'silver-studded' sword.

The most important finds in Tomb 8 (530 BC) were the silver obols of King Euelthon, examples of the first coins ever minted in Cyprus.

Silver coins of Cypriot kings. 5th century BC.

Euelthon (*c.* 560-525 BC).
The first coinage

Euelthon is the earliest historically documented personality in Salamis, the first eponymous Teucrid king, contemporary of the great Persian tyrants of Ionia. Herodotus mentions Euelthon when Pheretime, mother of the king of Cyrene Archesilaos III (530-510 BC), sought refuge in the royal court at Salamis: *Now Salamis at this time was ruled by Euelthon, who dedicated that marvellous censer at Delphi which stands in the treasury of the Corinthians* (IV, 162).

Euelthon minted the first coins bearing his name. The phenomenon of coinage is extremely early in Cyprus, in striking contrast to its much delayed acceptance by neighbouring peoples of Phoenicia and Cilicia. When the Cypriot kings submitted to Darius around 525 BC the Great King included Cyprus in the 5th satrapy of the Greek cities of Asia Minor. Under the influence of Ionia, coinage appeared in Cyprus, and specifically in Salamis, before the end of the sixth century BC.

Onesilos' Revolt

Salamis was protagonist in another important event, the Ionian Revolt of 499 BC, led by the heroic Onesilos, who ousted his pro-Persian brother from the throne of Salamis and *over-persuaded all Cyprus to revolt with him* (Herodotus V, 104). Onesilos, as well as the King of Soloi, Aristocypros, fell in the battle fought against the Persians on the plain of Salamis. This was the end of the Cypriot rebellion. The Persians banished the royal dynasty of the Teucrids and – as the coin issues with Phoenician characters attest – installed Phoenician tyrants, such as Audemon Prince of Tyre, on the throne of Salamis. Indeed it is suspected that the famous fifth-century BC palace was built on Vouni hill in order to place the 'Greek' city of Soloi under the constant surveillance of the pro-Persian king, whom the conquerors placed in neighbouring Marion.

Silver coin of King Euagoras I
(411-374/3 BC).

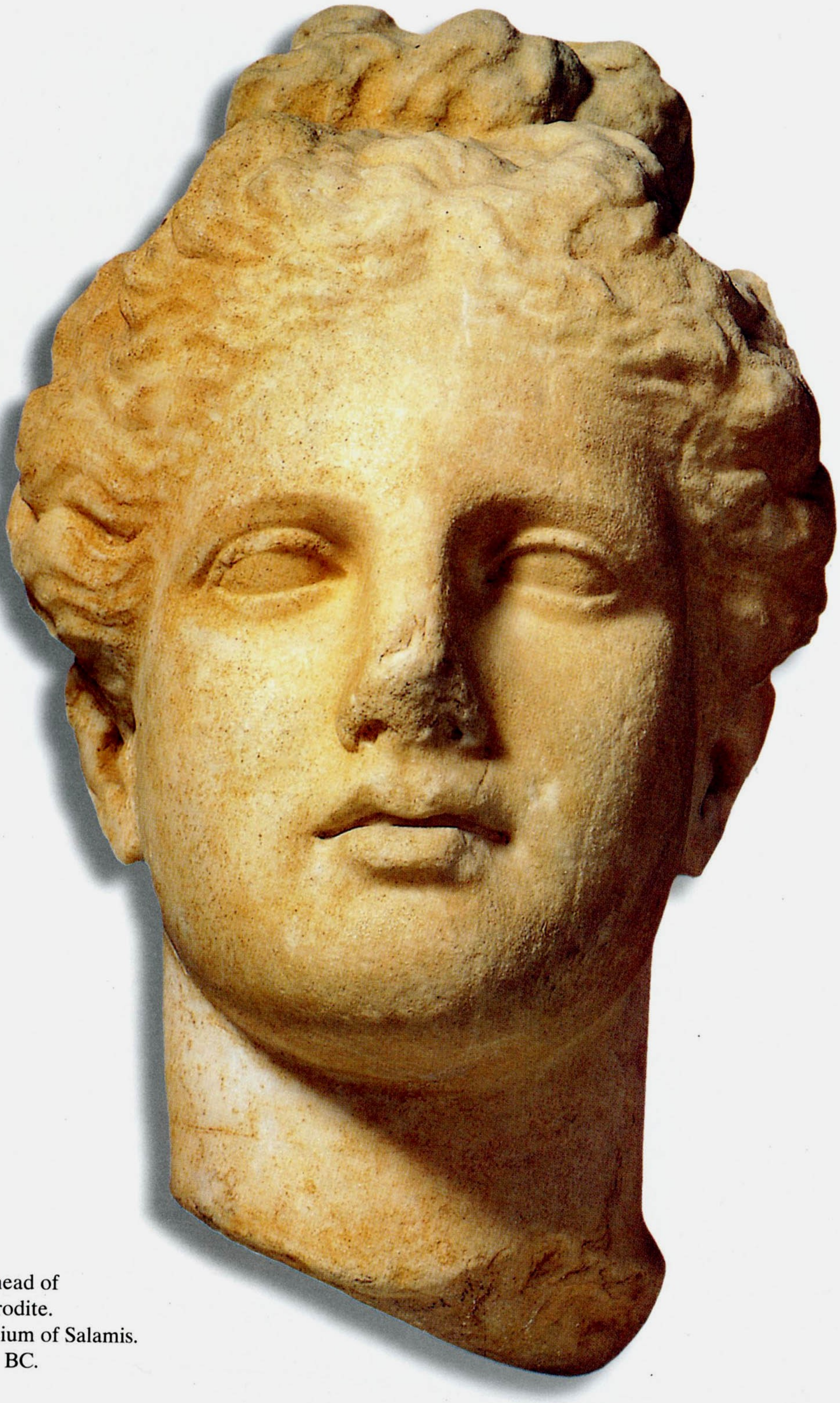
Cypro-Classical period (475-325 BC)

Euagoras I (411-373 BC)

Shortly before the end of the fifth century BC Euagoras I, towering figure in the political history of Cyprus, deposed the Phoenician puppet Audemon from his ancestral throne. Scion of the exiled royal house of the Teucrids, Euagoras returned from Cilicia in 411 BC and restored Greek rule in Salamis. He then struggled to unite the Cypriot kingdoms and to make the island independent. To achieve this goal he adopted a conscious pro-Athenian policy and introduced to Cyprus the Greek alphabet, which slowly replaced the syllabary.

For his services to the Athenian League Euagoras was declared an Athenian citizen. Pausanias describes that his statue stood in the Royal Stoa because: *This he did as an Athenian whose ancestry connected him with Salamis, for he traced his pedigree back to Teucer and the daughter of Cinyras* (I, 3, 2). Euagoras was the person in whom Isocrates placed his hopes for a true leader of the united Greeks. The archaeologist's spade did not manage to isolate the architectural remains of Euagoras' city, Salamis in the Classical period, before the fateful events of 1974.

On his coins Euagoras abandoned the oriental symbols and introduced Heracles, who was worshipped in Cyprus as a god and not as a demigod. Effigies of Athena, Aphrodite, Artemis and Apollo were represented on the coins of Euagoras' successors. Worship of the Olympian gods, especially of Zeus (Salamis), Athena (Idalion, Soloi, Vouni), Apollo (Curium) and of course Aphrodite (Paphos, Amathous), is evident in all the capitals of the kingdoms of Cyprus from the early sixth century BC.



Pentelic marble head of
the goddess Aphrodite.
From the gymnasium of Salamis.
Early 4th century BC.

Euagoras was succeeded by his son Nicocles (373-361 BC) who, in accordance with his father's wish, had been educated in Isocrates' school. Isocrates' three orations on Euagoras are addressed to him. He was succeeded by Euagoras II (361-351 BC), after whom came Pnytagoras (351-332 BC).

The gymnasium of Salamis. Graeco-Roman period.

Soloi. The theatre. Graeco-Roman period. Today an archaeological site in occupied territory.

Limestone head of Alexander the Great. From Soloi. Hellenistic I period (325-150 BC).

Hellenistic times (325-50 BC)

Alexander the Great did not abolish the city-kingdoms of Cyprus. In the year of his death, 323 BC, the king of Salamis was the son of Pnytagoras, Nicocreon (331-310 BC), the most worthy of the successors to Euagoras I. Nicocreon sent *ex-voto*s to Delphi and Delos, while philosophers and artists gathered in his court. In an epigram in Argos we read (free translation):

My motherland, the land of Pelops, Pelasgian Argos
My father Pnytagoras of the lineage of Ajax
I am Nicocreon. The land of Cyprus
which is watered all around by the sea raised me, me,
the king from demigod ancestors.
The Argeians honoured me with the bronze trophy
that I sent to the games in honour of Hera (*IG* IV, 583).

In the late fourth century BC, on the eve of the break up of the Cypriot kingdoms by Ptolemy I Soter, the Greek Cypriot kings, although they had been for centuries vassals of the great powers of the age (Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians), continued to proclaim their Greek origin.

The break up of the Cypriot kingdoms

After the death of Alexander (323 BC) Cyprus became the apple of discord between Ptolemy I and Antigonos. All the Cypriot kingdoms were drawn inevitably into the dispute. Ptolemy's ambition was to abolish the kingdoms of Cyprus, and this he did between 312 and 310 BC. In 311 BC Ptolemy accused Nicocreon of treason in favour of Antigonos and besieged Salamis. The last of the Teucrids and his family committed suicide in the palace, which was set alight. Five years later

Demetrius Poliorcetes destroyed Ptolemy's fleet outside the harbour of Salamis.

Nicocreon's Cenotaph

During the decade 306-295 BC, when Demetrius was master of Cyprus, the Salaminians built at a short distance from the royal tombs and prehistoric Enkomi, the monument that is nowadays known as Nicocreon's Cenotaph. The tumulus heaped over it in the third century BC protected it until it was excavated by the director of the Department of Antiquities in the 1960s. This man-made mound of earth concealed a rectangular exedra of small bricks on which sixteen unfired clay models of the royal family were left to burn on the funerary pyre together with javelins, swords, gold wreaths, alabastra and so on.

Thus ends the history of the kingdom of Salamis, that began in the eleventh century BC and continued until the early third century BC when Ptolemy I Lagides, known as Soter, annexed Cyprus to the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt in 295 BC. Thus ends the history of the other kingdoms too. For nigh on two hundred and fifty years, until 58 BC, Cyprus remained the most precious jewel in the Egyptian ptolemies' crown. However, Salamis was no longer a kingdom, nor even a capital from the first century BC when Paphos, being closer to Alexandria, became the administrative centre, the metropolis of Cyprus.

Head of Arsinoe II Philadelphos. Gold octadrachm of Salamis, issued by Ptolemy V Epiphanes, 204/3 BC

Of the three cities founded in Cyprus by Ptolemy I's successor, Ptolemy II Philadelphos (285-246 BC), in honour of his sister and wife Arsinoe, it is worth remembering that one must have been the forebear of medieval Famagusta.

Clay portrait heads of the royal family of Salamis. Found in the Cenotaph of Nicocreon, the last king of Salamis, who committed suicide rather than surrender his city to Ptolemy. 311 BC.

Detail from the large composition of a mosaic pavement, from the south *hidroterion* in the gymnasium of Salamis

Wall-painting from the gymnasium in Salamis.

Cyprus: A Roman province (58 BC- AD 330)

In 58 BC Cyprus becam part of the Roman province of Cilicia and in 22 BC an imperial province. The visible monuments of the ancient city of Salamis, which could be visited once of a day, as well as the theatre, agora and nymphaeum at Soloi, date from Roman and Early Christian times.

At Salamis the gymnasium, uncovered in the excavations of the Department of Antiquities, the palaestra and the thermae were built in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian (AD 117-138). The Roman temple of Zeus – on a high podium – seems to have been built on top of an earlier Hellenistic temple, most probably that of Zeus Salaminios, renowned from epigraphic and numismatic testimonies. The introduction of the cult of Zeus in Salamis is attributed to the city's founder, Teucer.

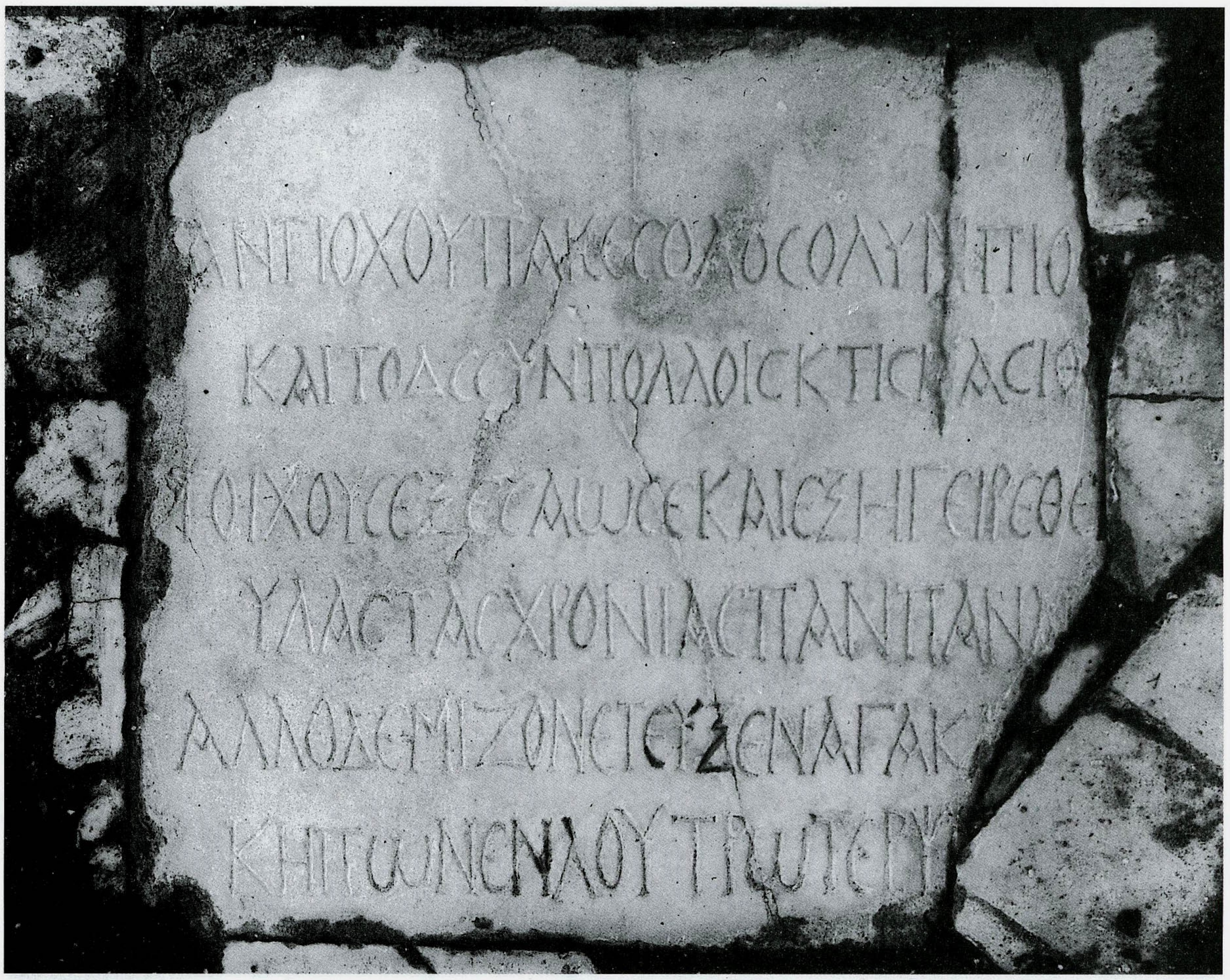
The theatre of Salamis, built in the reign of Augustus and able to accommodate 15,000 spectators, was abandoned after the two destructive earthquakes in the fourth century AD. The first, in 332, destroyed all the Cypriot cities, and the second, in 342, was accompanied by a tidal wave that actually submerged part of Salamis.

Christianity

The spread of Christianity among Cypriot Hellenism is due to the apsotles Paul and Barnabas, who came to the island together in AD 45 to preach the word of the Gospel. In the reign of Nero, Barnabas, son of a Jewish family originally from Jerusalem, was martyred in his birthplace Salamis, when he returned with Mark to teach in the synagogue there. The relic of Apostle Barnabas was buried in the plain of the Archaic royal tombs, between Salamis and Enkomi, there were the nowadays captive Monastery of the *Protothronos*, the founder of the Church of Cyprus, stands. Four centuries after Barnabas' martyrdom the Church of Cyprus became Autocephalous.

Marble statue of Aphrodite Anadyomene. From the gymnasium in Salamis. 2nd century AD.

Marble head of Apollo,
from a colossal statue of the god.
Found in the gymnasium of Salamis
2nd century AD.



Dedicatory epigram for Olympios. 4th-5th century AD.

Funerary epigram of the 3rd century AD, incised on a marble sarcophagus built in to an inside wall in the church of Saint Mamas, in Turkish-occupied Morphou.

Funerary epigram from the kingdom of ancient Chytroi (in Turkish-occupied Kythrea), for Sosipatra or Sostrate, who died young. 2nd-1st century BC. (Cyprus Museum. *IG* 211).

The Art of Letters in Ancient Cyprus

When the Achaeans came to Cyprus they brought with them their myths and traditions, language and religion, music and poetry. Intermarriage with the indigenous population, closer contacts with eastern peoples, initiation into the worship of Aphrodite and other factors widened their horizons and opened new avenues of expression.

In Cyprus, as in other regions of the Hellenic world, there is no secure evidence of the intellectual creation of the so-called 'Dark Ages', when myth was shaped gradually and probably diffused mainly in the form of the heroic epic. The archaeological data and literary *testimonia* strongly infer that epic poetry was already flourishing in Cyprus by the eighth century BC. Poetry contests are attested there, while the references to *ᾠδικῶς ἁμιλλώμενον τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι... μουσικῆς τεχνίτην, ἱερέα τῆς Ἀφροδίτης και χρησμολόγον Κινύρα,* (Kynyras, priest of Aphrodite and soothsayer, craftsman in music rivalling Apollo in song), for whom *οἱ ὕμνοι τῶν Κυπρίων,* (the hymns of the Cypriots) resound, perhaps confirm that song has a long history in Cyprus.

The *Cypriot Epics*, which narrated the 'pre-*Iliad*' events of the Trojan myth and inspired many artists (among them Attic dramatists) are reasonably attributed to Stasinos the Cypriot, while the diviner Euclos is reputed to have prophesied the barbarians' campaign against Greece and composed beautiful verses on the birth of a great poet (widely believed to be Homer) in nowadays Turkish-held Salamis:

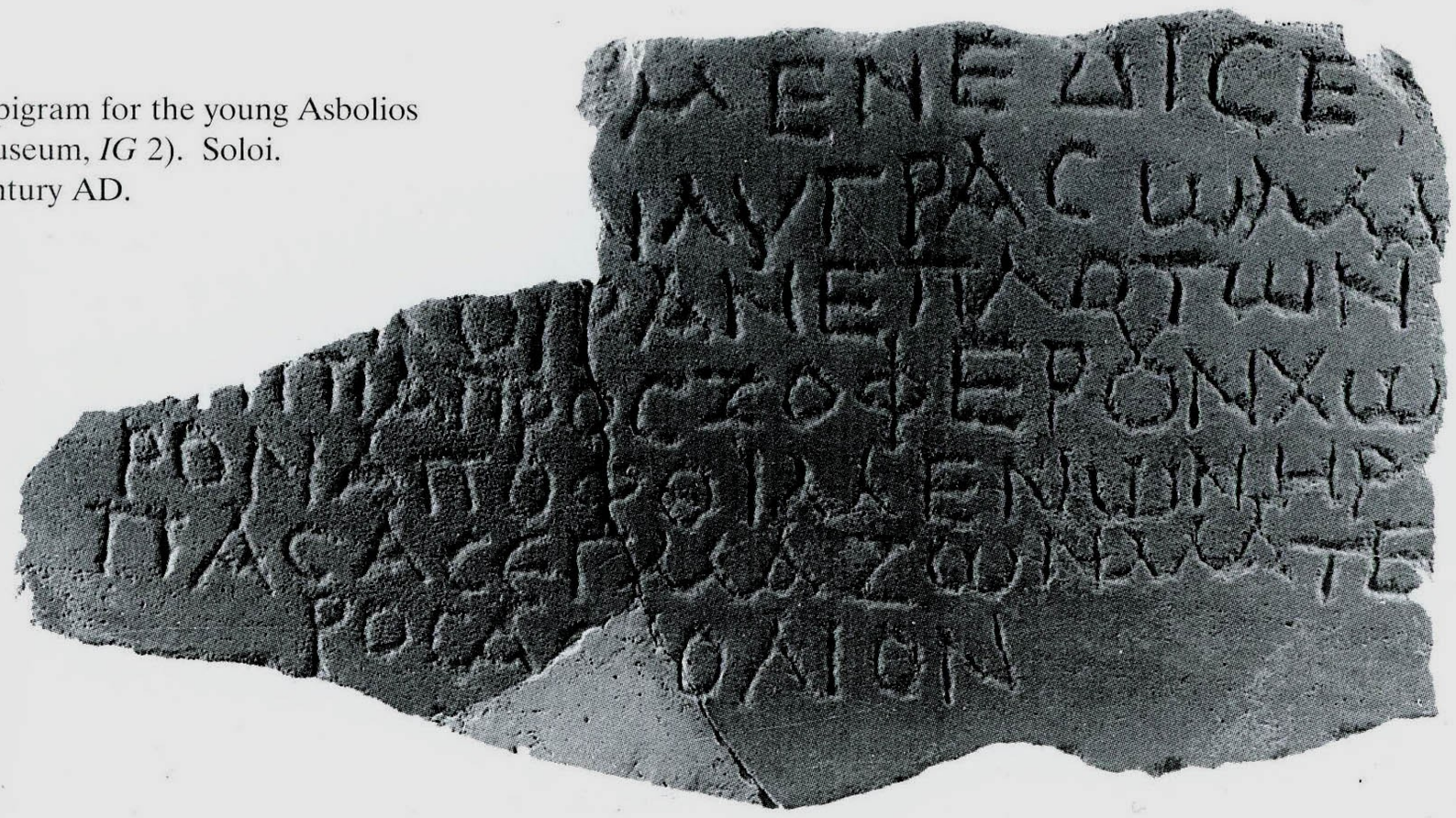
Καὶ τότ' ἐν εἰναλίῃ Κύπρῳ μέγας ἔσσετ'
ἀοιδός, ὅν τε Θεμιστὼ τέξει ἐπ' ἀγροῦ δῖα γυναικῶν
νόσει πολυκτεάνοιο πολύκλειτον Σαλαμῖνος.
Κύπρον δὲ προλιπὼν διερός θ' ὑπὸ κύμασιν ἀρθεὶς
Ἑλλάδος εὐρυχόρου μοῦνος κακὰ πρῶτος ἀείσας
ἔσσεται ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήραος ἤματα πάντα.

(And then to sea-girt Cyprus a great rhapsodist shall come,/ to whom a holy woman Themisto will give birth in a meadow/ outside Salamis the very wealthy and much renowned./ And leaving Cyprus, tossed and doused by the waves,/ first singing the ills of spacious Greece uniquely/ he shall remain immortal and unaging for ever.)

The very lyrical *Homeric Hymn* to Aphrodite is also believed to have been composed and sung, along with others, in the Salamis of Teucer the Telamonid:

Κυπρογενῆ Κυθέρειαν ἀείσομαι, ἥ τε βροτοῖσι
μείλιχα δῶρα δίδωσιν, ἐφ' ἱμερτῷ δὲ προσώπῳ
αἰεὶ μειδιάει καὶ ἐφ' ἱμερτὸν θέει ἄνθος.
Χαῖρε θεὰ Σαλαμῖνος ἐϋκτιμένης μεδέουσα
εἰναλίης τε Κύπρου· δὸς δ' ἱμερόεσσαν ἀοιδήν.
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.

(I shall hymn Cyprus-born Cythereia, who offers pleasing gifts to mortals, and always



Funerary epigram for the young Asbolios (Cyprus Museum, *IG* 2). Soloi. 2nd-3rd century AD.

smiles with her fair face and resembles a lovely flower. Hail goddess, guardian of well-built Salamis and sea-girt Cyprus; give me a charming song. And I will remember you in another song of mine).

The fruitful period of the Archaic epic was succeeded by a 'dark' period in terms of cultural output, which is identified with the years of Egyptian domination and a large part of the interlude of Persian rule. However, in the reign of Euagoras I (411-374 BC), King of Salamis, firm foundations were laid once again, on which a a notable intellectual edifice was built, due to close contacts between Cyprus and Athens. These were expressed during the Hellenistic period with rich fruits in all sectors.

Lyric poetry is represented by *the elegiast* Cleon from Curium (possibly poet of the *Argonautica*, on which Apollonios of Rhodes drew), the iambist Hermeias from Curium, Castorion from Soloi and other eponymous and anonymous lyric poets.

Dramatic poetry enjoyed a heyday with Sopatros from Paphos, writer of comedies, parodies and *phlyakes*, and others – as the theatres in free and occupied Cyprus attest. Prose was cultivated in all its genres. Mythography and history, rhetoric, philosophy and medicine are represented by a pleiad of Cypriot authors who overcame the barrier of distance and became well known in the wider Hellenic world. Typical examples are Zenon from Kition, founder of the Stoa, whose influence on philosophy worldwide was and is considerable, and Apollonios from Kition.

Of particular importance for the history of ancient Cypriot Letters are the inscriptions preserved in the island's soil and brought to light by the archaeologist's spade. Several of these are unique documents, not only of persons and events, the relations between Cyprus and other Greek regions etc., but also of the island's language and literature. Although the metrical inscriptions discovered and published are few, they nevertheless include some poetic masterpieces.

So the anonymous epigrammatist from now Turkish-occupied Morphou, in an epigram of the fifth-fourth century BC, in the Cypriot syllabary (in the Loizidis Collection until 1974, present whereabouts unknown), notes tersely and with bitter irony: *Here lie I Chaitas, son of Potheinios, of the Phoebaniotes lineage; after finding a bride for myself, I descended unmarried into Hades*, while in the third century AD, in an epigram incised on the marble coffin in the church of Saint Mamas, Artemidoros honours two beloved females and expresses his wish to be placed κλυτός (renowned) in the same carved stone sepulchre when he dies.

An unsurpassed epigram, accompanied by an outstanding representation, of about the same period, in the area of Golgoi, comments on the human fate: *Farewell. Eat lord and drink; never say a lot. It belongs to the immortal gods to have whatever they desire insatiately. Because no power of man is in god, but it so happened that a hand of god governs all, as much as is in the mind of man. Farewell.*

A truncated inscription of the late fourth century BC, from a funerary monument at Soloi, apparently refers to the city's renowned king, Pasicrates: *He who practised virtue in life and was blessed with splendid children, Pasicrates, king of the realm of the Solians, living rich of all the mortals and being dead, this earth covers him, stranger, in a stately tomb*.

In a votive epigram of the fourth-third century BC, from Kyrenia, the unknown dedicator mentions Apollo, while in the second-third century AD another citizen (in an epigram missing since 1974) perpetuates in two elegiac couplets, the memory of Charmos, who died before his prime:

Ἐννέ' ἐγὼ ζήσας λυκαβάντων ἤματα μούνων,
ἦλθον ὑποχθονίους ἀέλιον προλιπών,
ἐν δάκρυσιν γενέταν κ[αὶ μ]ατέρα καὶ στοναχαῖσιν
λείψας· οὔνομα δὲ ψιλὸν ἐρεῖ τίς ἔφυν.
<α>ἰα[ῖ], Χάρμε χρηστέ, χαῖρε.

(I lived for the days of only nine years, I came to the Underworld prematurely, leaving behind the sun, leaving within the tears of father and mother, and within sighs; and the bare name will say who I was. Alas, kind Charmos, farewell).

A.P. di Cesnola characterizes as a 'charming elegy' – comparing it with verse by Milton – a six-line epigram of the second century BC from Salamis, for Phileus aged twenty-three years:

Τὸ πρὶν ὁ σὺμ Μούσαις στέρξας βίον ἦλθε πρὸ μοίρας
ἀσκέπτους νεκύων εἰς θαλάμους Φιλέας,
τρισσὸν ἐπ' εἰκοστῷ πλήσας ἔτος· οἱ δὲ ὀλέσαντες
ἐλπίδα τὰν μούναν γηραλέοι γενέται
μύρονται τὸν ἄνυμφον ἀεὶ γόνον· ἀλλὰ τὸν ἁγνόν,
Φερσεφόνη, στείλαις χῶρον ἐς εὐσεβέων.

(He who chose life with Muses before his fate came/ to the dark chambers of the dead, Phileus/ three and twenty years; And those who lost/ their only hope, the aged parents/ lament their always unwed son; but Persephone, send the pure (youth) to a hallowed place.)

In an epigram incised on a white marble stele from Salamis (which was in the Famagusta Museum in 1974), an unknown poet of the first-second century AD launches into a unique aversion for nature and concludes with the need for modesty on account of man's triviality, while in the famous mosaics in the gymnasium (4th-5th century AD), benefactors of the city are commemorated.

In the kingdom of ancient Chytroi, in the second-first century BC, an unknown epigrammatist immortalized the young Sosipatra (or Sostrate) whose father Gamos brought her up with tender care and looked forward to a good marriage for her, but she died unwed. At Soloi, in a funerary epigram in honour of Euodia, around the mid-third century AD, death is faced as 'the sweet end of life':

Εὐοδίας τόδε σῆμα πέλει γλυκερὸν μετὰ φένγος,
ἧς κλέος ἀθάνατον λάμπ>ε<τε σωφροσύνης.
ἀλλ' ἐκρίθη βιότου γλυκερὸν τέλος ἐν μερόπεσσιν
πᾶσιν. ὃ τοῦτο φυγεῖν οὔποτέ τὶς δύναται.

(This grave with the sweet light is of Euodia, where the immortal reputation of her prudence shines; but the sweet end of life is judge for all mortals; that precisely no one can ever escape).

At Soloi again, in the second-third century AD, the memory of young Asbolios was revered in lyrical lines, in a language characteristic of the age:

[Οὐ] μεν ἔδι σε [καλεῖ]ν λυγρὰ σώματα, κοίρανε Πλούτων, νήπια πρὸς ζωφερὸν χῶρον ἀποφθιμένων· ἥρπασας ἐγ μαζῶν ματέρος Ἀ[σβ]όλιον.

(Lord Pluto you should not take weak bodies, infants to the gloomy realm of the dead; you seized Asbolios from his mother's breast).

These few examples are just some of the incontravertible evidence of the treasures concealed in the occupied territory of Cyprus, inaccessible to the researcher since 1974 and suffering uncontrolled desecration and destruction. The paucity of extant fragments of ancient Cypriot Letters overall is due to the geographical isolation of Cyprus from the Greek mainland. However, the names of the authors and the titles of their works bear witness to a very rich intellectual and scholarly output. And most important: what survives of ancient Cypriot Letters in poetry or prose is written in the Greek language and presents the same general and specific traits as the corresponding cultural creations from other parts of the Hellenic world, both in form and content. Consequently the history of ancient Cypriot Letters is identified with the history of Greek letters in ancient Cyprus.

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Byzantine Medieval Cyprus
Aspect and Character

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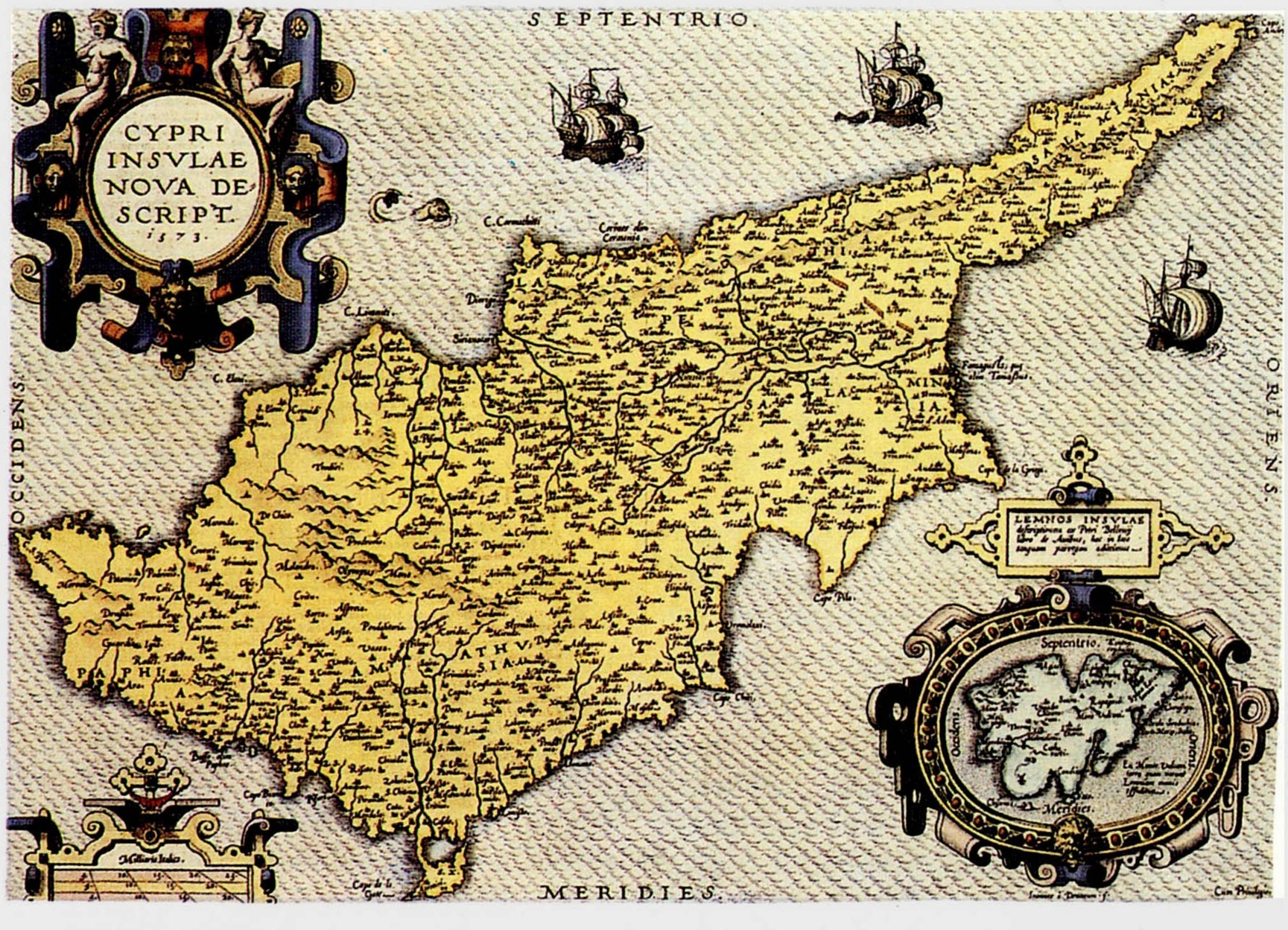
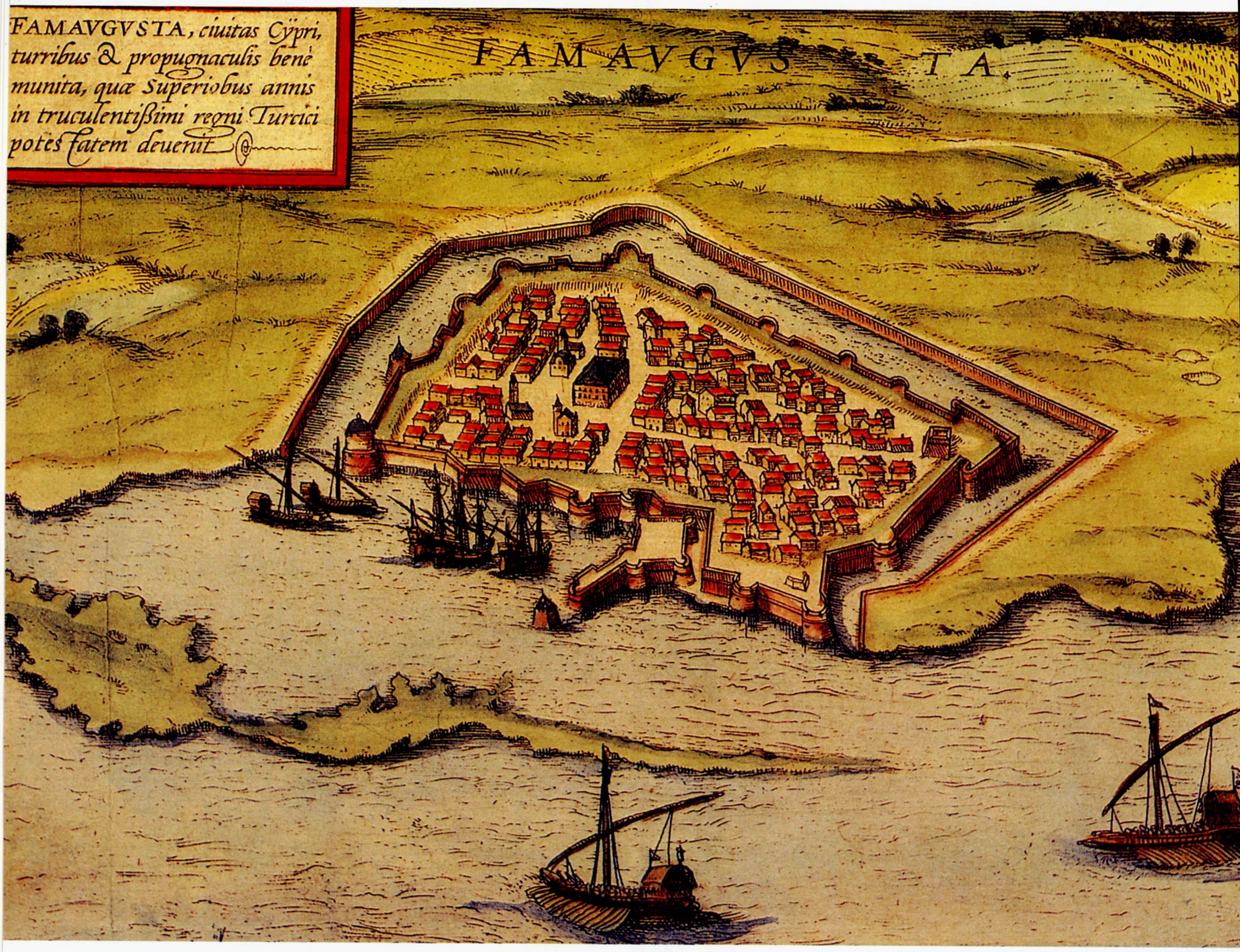


Map of Cyprus drawn by Abraham Ortelius, Antwerp 1573.

Saint Neophytos.
Detail of a wall-painting from
the church of the Enkleistra of Saint Neophytos

Aspro trachys. Electrum coin of Isaac Comnenos (1184-1191).



Engraving of Famagusta, from *Guitates Orbis Terrarum*, 1599.

Sgraffito depiction of a female figure from a glazed vase in the Christakis Loizidis Collection, Morphou. Nothing is known of the fate of this piece and most of the Collection since the invasion.

For centuries Cyprus, the largest island in the Eastern Mediterranean, was by virtue of its geographical position – its fortune and misfortune – a crossroads of peoples and cultures from three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Cyprus was part of the Byzantine world not only during the period in which it belonged administratively to the Byzantine Empire (330-1191) but also after its capture by the Crusaders in 1191 and the creation of the Medieval Kingdom of Cyprus.

It was later part of the Postbyzantine world, when, after the conquest of Cyprus by the Ottomans (1570-1571), it joined its fate and hopes with the rest of subject Hellenism, yearning for the fallen Queen of Cities (Constantinople).

Christianity reached Cyprus very early, brought by Paul himself, Apostle of the Nations, and his Cypriot disciple Barnabas. Hierarchs of the Church of Cyprus, such as Spyridon of Trimythous, Constantias Epiphanios and others, were protagonists in the struggles and synods against the heresies, and after persistent efforts the 'saint-bearing' (*hagiotokos*) Cypriot Church avoided subjugation to the Patriarchate of Antioch. In 488 it was recognized officially by Emperor Zenon as an Autocephalous Archbishopric, revered throughout the Early Christian world and endowed with special privileges: the Archbishop of Cyprus signed in cinnabar, wore a purple imperial mantle and held the imperial sceptre instead of the pastoral crosier.

With the Arab expansion in the mid-seventh century Cyprus suffered its first Arab invasion, led by Moabia, in 648/9. Over the next three hundred years, from 649 until 961, more than twenty such incursions destroyed cities such as Salamis, Lampousa and Soloi, disturbed the island's peaceful life and prevented its progress. Although the Arabs never succeeded in occupying Cyprus they managed to establish some kind of condominium with Constantinople, giving them rights to the island's taxes. During this troubled period in the Middle East, Cyprus is known to have been a refuge for Christians from Syria and Palestine, as well as a haven for iconodules, since it remained beyond the pale of iconoclast edicts and loyal to the veneration of icons. When Niketas Chalkoutzes, general of Nicephoros Phocas, finally stemmed the Arab tide in 965, Cyprus was returned to the fold of Byzantium.

In the years that followed the influence of Constantinople was pronounced, in spite of moves for self-determination fomented by Byzantine officials; Theophilos Erotikos (1042) and Rapsomates (1092), in their demands for autonomy, drew the island into new adventures, weakening its defences at precisely the time the Crusaders appeared on the horizon.

Constantinople showed considerable interest in Cyprus during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Castles were constructed in the Pentadaktylos and monasteries were founded, such as those at Kykkos and Machairas, which are linked with the imperial Comnenos family. Churches were also built and decorated with wall-paintings, under the patronage of Byzantine dignitaries such as the Duke of Cyprus Eumathios Philokales and Magister Nicephoros. Wall-paintings such as those in the chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis (1110-1118) and the Virgin of Asinou (1105/6) at once follow and represent the artistic currents of the age, while works such as those in the Enkleistra of Saint Neophytos at Paphos (1183) and the Virgin of Arakos (1192), which are linked with the painter Theodoros Apsevdis, attest a direct relationship with the Byzantine capital.

Detail of the Lamentation. Wall-painting from the cemetery chapel of the Saint John Chrysostom Monastery at Koutsoventis. Early 12th century.

Concurrently, notable bishops such as Nikolaos Mouzalon occupied the archiepiscopal throne of the Cypriot Church and in Paphos a vital spiritual movement developed around the saint, author and historian Neophytos the Enkleistos, perhaps the most fascinating figure in Late Byzantine Cyprus.

Although in the late twelfth century Cyprus, like the rest of the Byzantine Empire, experienced the artistic floruit of the final years of the Comnenos dynasty, it was at the same time troubled by a new apostasy, this time by Isaac Doukas Comnenos. Scion of an aristocratic family and a restless rogue, *the most wrathful of men* and *evil as no other* – as he is described by the Byzantine historian Niketas Choniates –, Isaac escaped to the island from Cilicia and in 1184 declared himself 'Despot' of Cyprus.

The events in the dismal years of Isaac's rule (1183-1191) and the charged atmosphere of the late twelfth century are recorded with unique perspicacity by Saint Neophytos in his work *Περὶ τῶν κατα την χώραν Κύπρον σκαιῶν* (On the sinister (events) throughout the land of Cyprus). In this he also eloquently narrates the conquest of Cyprus by the leader of the Third Crusade, Richard I the Lionheart, King of England. While voyaging from his distant realm of 'Inghilterra', *en route* to liberate the Holy Land, he captured the island, defeated Isaac and cast him in gaol. Richard soon realized the difficulties of controlling Cyprus, however, and sold it initially to the Knights Templar (1191). One year later it passed to Guy de Lusignan, deposed King of Jerusalem. The Lusignan dynasty, which originated from Poitou, was destined to rule Cyprus for almost three hundred years (1192-1489), while the European Christian state they created continued to exist as an overseas possession of Venice for more than a century afterwards (1489-1571).

Along with the Lusignans, nobles and dignitaries who had remained in the East after the capitulation of the Crusader strongholds in Syria and Palestine, settled in Cyprus. They formed the new aristocracy that replaced the

The prayer of Saint Neophytos. Wall-painting in the holy bema of the church of the Enkleistra of Saint Neophytos 1183. Saint Neophytos appears between two angels. The wall-painting was executed by the painter Theodoros Apsevdis while Hosios Neophytos was still alive, and under his instruction and supervision.

Byzantine ruling class. The subsequent loss of the Crusader ports on the mainland shore enhanced Cyprus as a major commercial centre and a class of merchants emerged in the island's coastal towns, giving them a cosmopolitan character. Alongside the merchants from the West – Venetians, Genoese, Pisans – who settled in the busy Cypriot ports, especially Famagusta, were Syrian Christians, Maronites and Armenians, who were involved in trading the products of the East to the West and vice versa. The merchants' wealth, extolled by chroniclers and foreign travellers, verged on the legendary.

Greek culture and letters apparently declined during the early years of Frankish rule, and Gregory the Cypriot, future Patriarch of Constantinople, left the island to gain a better education in the Greek centres of Asia Minor, specifically Nicaea. The situation was evidently quite different fifty years later, as the encomium written by the Byzantine Nicephoros Gregoras for the Lusignan King Hugo IV (1324-1359), warm patron of Letters, reveals. The Cypriot Georgios Lapithes played a leading role in the flourishing intellectual movement at this time, corresponding with renowned Byzantine literati. A group of bibliographers was active in this milieu, distinguished among whom was the scribe Romanos Anagnostes.

During the long interval of Frankish rule the Lusignan kings and Latin nobles adopted local habits and adapted to the Cypriot way of life. As time passed Poitou in France seemed remote indeed and the French lords thought of Cyprus as their home, identifying with this 'sweet land'. Castles, palaces, Gothic churches and Catholic monasteries all over Cyprus bear witness to the Frankish presence. Its influences are obvious in the local architecture, the language, place names, customs and traditions. Throughout the reign of the Lusignans the indigenous population joined them in the struggles against the 'godless Agarenes' for the survival of Christianity in the East, closely followed their family conflicts and silently witnessed their court intrigues. The lore of

Medieval glazed vase with depiction of a knight in chain-mail armour, from the Lapithos workshops. These workshops continued to produce ceramics until the summer of 1974, when the potters were forced to abandon them and flee as refugees to the free southern part of Cyprus.
The vase belonged to the Christakis Loizidis Collection in Morphou. It survived the pillage of the Turkish invasion because it was on loan to an exhibition abroad. It is nowadays in the Museum of the Pierides Foundation.

Icon of Saint John the Baptist, from the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis. 16th century. Its fate is unknown since the plundering of the monastery church.

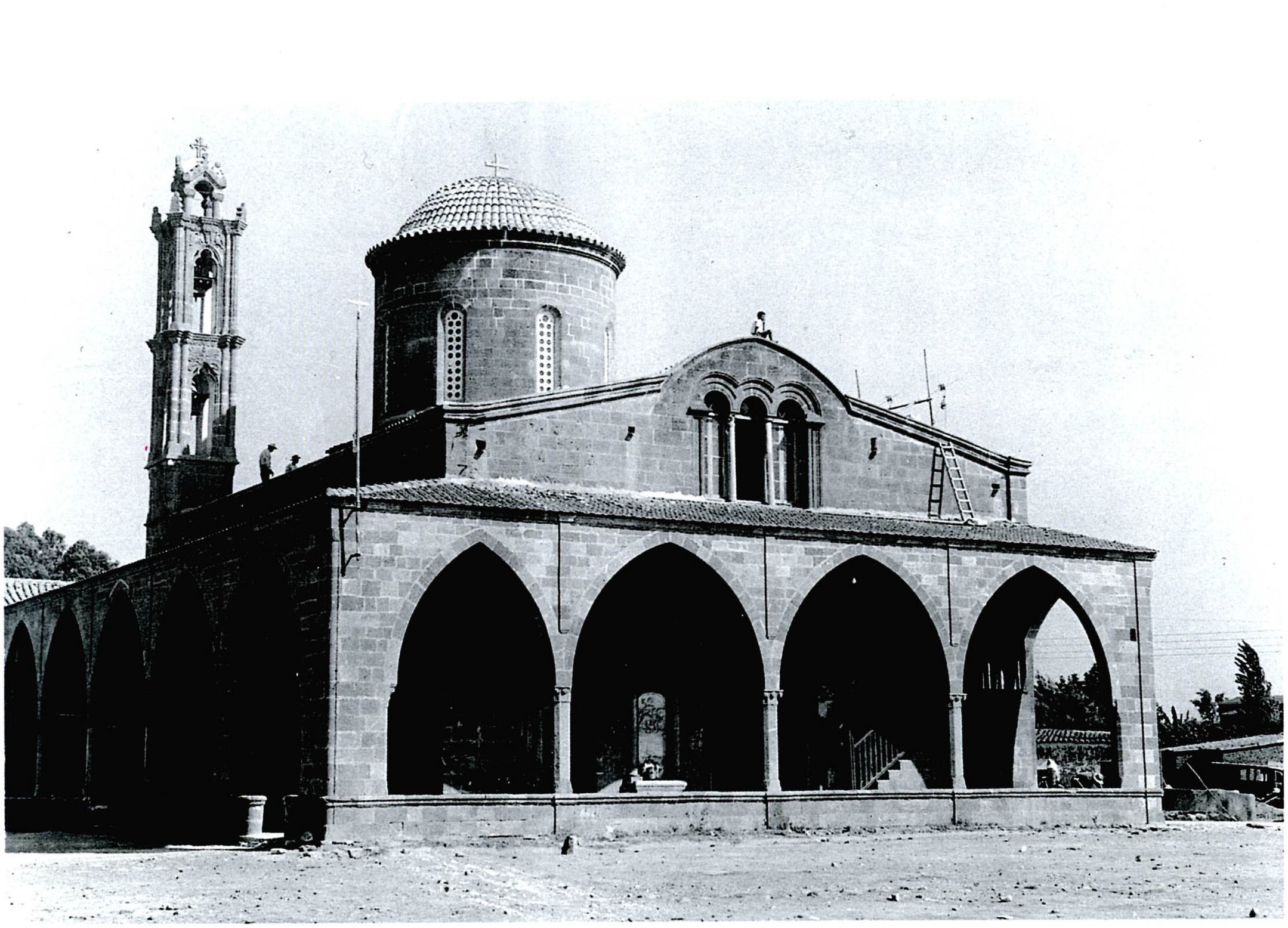
'Regaina' was linked not only with ancient ruins and medieval castles but also with the hero of the marches epic, Digenes Akritas. Tales of rivalries, hatred and amours perhaps mean no more than the struggle as well as the marriage that took place in Medieval Cyprus between the oriental-Byzantine element on the one hand and the occidental-European on the other.

The quiet but steady domination of the Greek language over all social strata in Medieval Cyprus was achieved in parallel with and as a result of the various ethnic groups' identification with the island. It was not just the local Greek population, and primarily the great mass of countryfolk far from the bureaucratic centres of the towns, that kept alive the language of its forebears – together with its Orthodox faith –, Cypriot Greek asserted itself as an expressive lingusitic instrument for merchants of diverse origin, for the ruling class and even the Lusignan court. International treaties were drafted in Greek, the medieval laws – and specifically the Assizes of the Court of Bourgesia – were translated into Cypriot Greek, French-Cypriot families prepared their wills in Greek, even Catholic clerics spoke Greek, as foreign travellers observed.

The Medieval Cypriot Greek dialect not only prevailed in the mélange of languages and peoples on the island, it was also used for some of the earliest works in Neohellenic literature, such as Leontios Machairas' *Ἐξήγησις τῆς γλυκείας χώρας Κύπρου ἡ ὁποία λέγεται Κρόνακα τοὐτέστιν Χρονικόν.* (Exegesis of the sweet land of Cyprus, which is called Kronaka, that is Chronicle), written in the fifteenth century. Here Leontios Machairas presents contemporary events of the period 1360-1432 in detail, whereas, consistent with the tradition of Byzantine chroniclers, he mentions earlier events more briefy. Leontios Machairas, a superior diplomatic official in the Lusignan court, remained an Orthodox Greek Cypriot in heart and mind, acknowledging the Byzantine emperor as 'lord of the world and king' even in the heyday of Latin rule, and expressing himself in *'Romaika'* (vernacular Greek), even though, as he admitted himself, his language had been 'barbarianized'. Machairas' deep love of his fatherland and tender concern for its fate run through his narrative, echoed in phrases such as 'sweet country', 'this small island' and others.

In the mid-fifteenth century the presence in the Lusignan court of the Byzan-

The church of Saint James at Trikomo. Built in the 14th century, its Byzantine architecture includes western features such as the poros ashlar blocks and the lancet arches. The church was plundered during the Turkish invasion and its icons stolen.



The church of Saint Mamas at Morphou. A 'Franko-Byantine' monument of the early 16th century built on the ruins of earlier churches. It was plundered by the invaders and the icons were stolen.

Kantara castle. Built on the mountain ridge of the eastern Pentadaktylos, it dominates the northeast coast of Cyprus and the Mesaoria plain. It was constructed in 11th century, while later additions were made by the Franks.

The castle of Saint Hilarion, built in the late 11th century by Emperor Alexios I Comnenos.
Sections of the outer enceinte and the church with the adjacent buildings date from this period.
The castle was reinforced by the Lusignans and served as the refuge of the royal family.
Today in occupied territory, a statue of Ataturk stands on the fortification wall.

View of the Medieval walls of Famagusta with the 'Othello Bastion'.

View of the northwest bastion of Kyrenia castle, with the picturesque harbour in the background.

Silver grosso of Pierre I Lusignan (1358-1369).
The king is shown enthroned, holding a sword and a globus crucifer with the Jerusalem cross.
During his reign the Medieval kingdom of Cyprus reached its zenith.

tine princess Heleni Palaeologina, daughter of Theodoros Palaeologos Despot of Mystras, who in 1441 married John II Lusignan and became Queen of Cyprus, reinforced the Orthodox faith and the use of Greek as the language of the ruling class. Furthermore, refugees – laymen and monks who after the Fall of Constantinople to the Turks fled to Cyprus 'on account of the Greek language of the inhabitants' – found haven in the Monastery of Saint George Manganon in Nicosia, which developed into an important centre for cultivating Greek letters and copying manuscripts.

During the period of Venetian rule relations with Italy became closer, the mutual influence between the Greek and the Latin world was bolstered, and students and artists were drawn from Venetian-held Cyprus to Italy. In the sixteenth century the 'Love Rhymes', rendered in the Cypriot Greek of the age, not only brought the style of Petrarch to Cyprus, but also gave Neohellenic literature its first lyrical love poems.

When news of the Fall of Constantinople reached Cyprus in 1453 the hearts of the island's Greeks were broken. Along with the rest of Hellenism, they lamented the loss of the Queen of Cities. With the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1570-1571 Greek Cypriots were subject to the common regime and fate of Hellenism in the Postbyzantine world. The Orthodox Church of Cyprus was able to restore officially its relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, while throughout the centuries of Turkish rule the Greek Cypriots, maintaining their Byzantine cultural identity and experiencing *'Byzance après le Byzance'*, shared with other Orthodox Christians and kindred Greeks, the legends, visions and expectations for the revival of the Nation.

Portrait of Caterina Cornaro
the last Queen of Cyprus. Titian. 16th century

Franks and Venetians in Cyprus

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‘Great the cry and insufferable the smoke coming from the North’ wrote the monk Neophytos the Enkleistos, lamenting the vicissitudes of his homeland, shortly after the conquest of Cyprus by the ‘most wretched’ king of ‘Inghilterra’, Richard the Lionheart. The events of the final decade of the twelfth century were decisive for the island’s historical fortunes.

On account of its geographical position, between East and West, Cyprus was used as a port of call by pilgrims to the Holy Land, while during the Crusades it supplied the Crusaders with victuals and vessels. From the moment the King of England, one of the leaders of the Third Crusade, disembarked at the port of Limassol in the spring of 1191 and went on to capture the entire island, Cyprus played a significant role in the history of the Crusades. English domination was short-lived. After insurrectionist moves by the Cypriots against the Latins, that quickly failed, Richard sold the island to the Order of the Knights Templar of Saint John, in order to relieve himself of the problems created by the new possession. When the Templars were faced with a new rebellion and cancelled the agreement, he ceded Cyprus to the French noble Guy de Lusignan, King of Jerusalem.

So after a strange series of events, Byzantine Cyprus, ‘the illustrious, formerly felicitous and splendid’ as it is described in the sources, became a kingdom under the French dynasty of the Lusignan, which reigned for almost 300 years, establishing the period of Latin rule. The Frankish conquest, which in the opinion of later historians was either simply an aberration of the Third Crusade or, much more likely, part of a plan by the English king, enhanced Cyprus as the most powerful Crusader state in the region and the ideal base for Crusader campaigns. Throughout their sovereignty the kings of Cyprus kept alive the idea of the Crusade, taking the lead in Crusader ventures.

For the local population the domination of the Franks and the severing of political ties with Byzantium meant subjugation to the feudal system of the West. Concurrently, in the ecclesiastical sector, the Catholic Church sequestered the property of the Orthodox, limited the number of Orthodox episcopal sees and replaced the Orthodox archbishop with a Catholic one. In the closing years of Lusignan rule, Heleni Palaeologina (†1458), daughter of the Despot of the Peloponnese, Theodoros II, and wife of John II Lusignan, struggled to improve the plight of oppressed

The Gothic cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Famagusta. Early 14th century. It was converted into a mosque in 1571.

Monumental doorways of the cathedral of Saint Nicholas
in Famagusta. Early 14th century.

Silver grosso of Jacobus II (1460-1473). The king is shown on horseback.

Cypriot Hellenism by supporting the Orthodox faith. Noteworthy is the fact that this Byzantine noblewoman's daughter, Carlotta Lusignan, was Greek-speaking: indeed, her French was so bad that she needed an interpreter to help draft royal decrees.

The marriage of Jacobus II (1460-1473) to Caterina Cornaro, scion of the renowned Venetian family, brought Venetian infiltration of the kingdom's administrative machinery. On her husband's death, Caterina assumed the government of Cyprus as regent. In 1489 Venice, which had for some time been preparing the way to expand its rule, forced her to abdicate and hand over the island to the Serenissima Republic of Saint Mark. So began the Venetian period of Cypriot history, which lasted until 1571. In August of that year the Ottomans captured Famagusta. During the siege of the city its last Venetian defender, Marcantonio Bragadin, suffered a horrendous death at enemy hands (he was torn limb from limb and flayed alive, and his skin filled with straw and cotton was paraded round the harbours of Syria and Caramania as a salutory lesson to Christians).

With the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus, Venice was finally ousted from this nodal point of the Eastern Mediterranean. It lost its connecting link with Asia, that is with the long and profitable route to India. The loss of Cyprus not only dealt a crucial blow to the interests of Venice but to Christendom as a whole. The words of the sultan at the Venetian-Turkish negotiations are telling in this respect: *You* (Christians), he said, addressing the Venetian bailiff of Constantinople, *by destroying our fleet* (at Lepanto), *plucked a hair from our beard; we, however, by taking Cyprus, have cut off one of your arms.*

The protracted Latin presence in Cyprus inevitably led to a merging of Cypriot and Western cultural traits. As a result of intermarriage many families were either Hellenized or Latinized, depending on circumstances. However, despite the existence of some Frankish-Cypriot or Veneto-Cypriot families, there were no radical changes in either the ethnological or the social structure of Cypriot Hellenism's demographic base. Undoubtedly the natural environment and the human milieu of Cyprus influenced the foreigners who settled there. By the same token, the Cypriots' contact with the currents of the Renaissance resulted in a remarkable marriage of the deeply rooted Byzantine spiritual and artistic traditions with cultural borrowings from Western Europe. The coteries of the last of the Lusignans included such figures as Georgios Bustronios, of French origin, who wrote a chronicle in the Cypriot dialect. Among the choice fruits of this Greek-Italian culture was the translation of Petrarch's love poems into Cypriot dialect, which circulated in the time of the Venetian Occupation. The Greek poet proclaims his love for Chrystalleni, who in his eyes replaces Petrarch's Laura. The *Chronicle* of the Cypriot Leontios Machairas and the Cypriot song of Arodaphnousa inspired Gabriele d'Annunzio's *Pisanella* as well as other poems of his.

Following the habit of the Turkish sultans, who used Greek as the official language, the Lusignan kings and the representatives of the French aristocracy adopted the language of the local population as *alteram linguam*. Some examples are cited indicatively: In the early thirteenth century the King of Cyprus drew up a treaty with the Seljuk Sultan of Konya in Greek. In 1335 the Augustine monk Jacobo from Verona wrote: 'everyone

The famous Abbey of Pellapais on the slopes of the Pentadaktylos, overlooking Kyrenia.
Built in the 13th century, it is a splendid example of Gothic architecture in Cyprus.
In 1974 the village of Pellapais was a temporary refuge for many of the citizens of Kyrenia
before they were expelled from their family hearths.

Part of the castle in occupied Kyrenia.

in Cyprus speaks Greek'. Hugo Busac, confidant of Carlotta and husband of a Cantacuzeni, composed his wife's epitaph in Greek. He also compiled his family tree in Greek but in Latin characters, and noted below his coat of arms *Tuta ene edica mou* (These are mine). Even the Latin clergy spoke and wrote Greek. Last, when a young Veneto-Cypriot, who had been taken captive by the Turks in 1571 and managed to escape, eventually reached Venice after many trials and tribulations, he presented himself to the Republic's authorities, declaring as proof of his identity that his beloved homeland was Famagusta and that the languages he knew from birth were *lingua greca* and *lingua franca*. The case of the Veneto-Cypriot refugee in the city of the doges, after the Turkish conquest of Cyprus, is just one of the many examples of Cypriot Hellenism's cultural assimilation of the foreign ethnic groups that had settled on the island over the years of Latin rule.

The Frankish Occupation of Cyprus, where two heterogeneous cultures, Byzantine and Western, met and mingled, is attested today by various heraldic escutcheons and monuments of Gothic art. The most important Frankish building in Cyprus is the cathedral of Holy Wisdom (Santa Sophia) in Nicosia, building of which began in 1209, with stone brought from Kyrenia. The church was the seat of the island's Latin Archbishop and in it the kings of Cyprus were crowned; some of them were buried there too. When the city was captured in 1570, the Ottomans removed the altars and the decorations from the cathedral, covered its interior walls with white plaster and converted it into a mosque.

After their coronation in Santa Sophia the Lusignans, who had added to their title that of King of Jerusalem, went to the cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Famagusta, in order to receive officially the crown of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

This church, an exquisite example of the Gothic order built in the early fourteenth century, was also converted into a mosque when Famagusta fell to the Ottomans in 1571.

In one of the loveliest parts of northern

Cyprus, in the wider area of Kyrenia, the monastery complex of Pellapais was founded by Augustine monks, probably in the thirteenth century. Many of the buildings in this architectural ensemble were built in the fourteenth century, during the reign of Hugo IV. Another interesting monument that bears witness to the co-existence of Byzantine and Western traditions is the church of Saint George of the Greeks in Famagusta, which was added to an earlier Byzantine church.

Wonderful works of military architecture have survived from the time of the Venetian Occupation, manifestations of the pragmatic, prosaic mentality of a mercantile state, for which Cyprus was merely an entrepôt port and trading base, supporting its economic might. When Cyprus was annexed to the political orbit of Venice the most important fortifications on the island were: a) the Lusignan fortress of Nicosia, b) the Frankish walls of Famagusta, dating from the early fourteenth century, c) the fortress of Kyrenia, also built in the Frankish period, d) the series of three Byzantine forts in the Pentadaktylos (of Saint Hilarion, Voufavento and Kantara), which had interventions from the Lusignans, and e) the forts of Paphos, Limassol and Colossi. Hugo I had granted the area of Colossi as a fief to the Order of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, who built a castle there and installed the Great Commandery. The Venetians did not build new fortresses but adapted those they had inherited from the Franks to the defensive needs of the day, as well as to the techniques of Venetian military engineering. In contrast to their neglect of the fortifications of southern Cyprus, which they abandoned or only maintained for guarding the coastal zone (fortresses in Limassol, Paphos and Larnaca), they paid much attention to the security of those of Famagusta, Kyrenia and Nicosia, which because of their proximity to Turkey were of strategic importance for the island's defence.

Unidentified saint. Wall-painting from the church of
Saint Solomone, near Komi tou Yalou. 9th century.
It was removed between 1978 and 1980.
Found in the possession of Aydin Dikmen in Munich.

Byzantine and Postbyzantine Art in Cyprus

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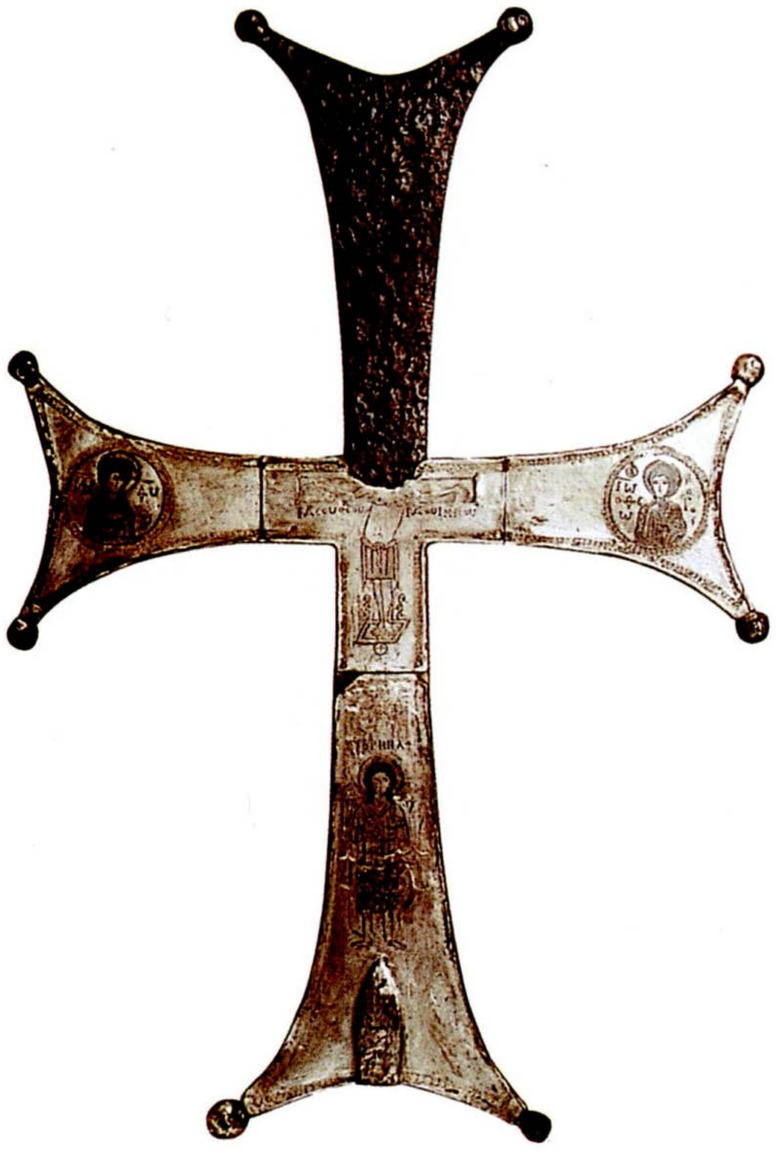


Silver-plated iron cross. 12th century.

7138

Swan. Detail from the mosaic pavement in the basilica of Soloi.

Gold finger ring with scene of the Annunciation on the bezel. Early Christian times.

Christianity was preached in Cyprus very early, by Greek-educated Jews, straight after Stephen was stoned to death. The apostles Paul and Barnabas visited the island in AD 45 and indeed converted the first Roman official, Vice-Consul Sergius Paulus, to the new faith. Barnabas, who was of Cypriot origin, assumed responsibility for the systematic organization of the Church. He visited Cyprus again and was martyred in Salamis. Nothing is known of the Church of Cyprus during the first three centuries of the Christian era; the sole Christian remains from this time are two crypto-Christian grave stelae and the sarcophagus of Saint Reginus, which dates from the second or the third century.

By the fourth century there was an organized Church in Cyprus. Three bishops attended the Ist Ecumenical Council, thirteen bishops signed the acta of the Council of Sardica, while in the late fourth century Theophilos of Alexandria mentions the names of fifteen bishops. Even though there was an organized Church, Christian art appeared somewhat belated in Cyprus compared with other lands in the region. This delay was due to the major earthquakes in 332, 342 and 365, or more correctly 370, as well as to the protracted periods of drought in the fourth century.

After the economic recovery in the late fourth century, enormous basilicas began to be built in the towns that had suffered earthquake damage. In Salamis, which was renamed Constantia in honour of Emperor Constantine who rebuilt it after the 332 and 342 earthquakes, Saint Epiphanios began to build a large basilica, originally with seven aisles. This monument has not been excavated completely. Only the nave, the narthex, the long passages beginning from the narthex and running the entire length of the north and south walls of the basilica, and the baptistery which is located to the east of the basilica, have been exposed. The monument was completed after Saint Epiphanios's death in 403, by his successor Savvinos.

Another large basilica of the late fourth century, also seven-aisled originally, has been excavated around the church of Saint Kyriake in Paphos. The nave, the narthex, the four-porticoed atrium and a large part of the *episkopion* have been uncovered, but not the baptistery.

The small three-aisled basilica that was excavated inside and outside the north wall of the church of Saint Spyridon at Tremetousia also dates to the late fourth century. According to the inscription on the mosaic pavement this was commissioned by Saint Spyridon, who evidently appeared to the mosaicist in a dream; the inscription records that the saint participated in the memory of the Holy Bishops to whom the basilica was dedicated.

View from the west of the basilica at the village of Ayia Trias Yalousas. 5th century.

Silver paten from Lambousa.
The Marriage of David. 7th century.

Very large and important basilicas have been excavated at Soloi (three-aisled with huge atrium but no narthex) and around the katholikon of the Acheiropoietos Monastery at Lambousa (five-aisled).

Of outstanding importance is the Kampanopetra basilica, excavated at Salamis. Three-aisled with narthex and a four-porticoed atrium, it has a large peristyle court to the west. An atrium excavated to the east communicated with the narthex via passages running the length of the north and south walls. There was a martyrion in the middle of the east portico of the east atrium. So this monument recalls the Constantinian basilica of the Resurrection in Jerusalem.

Other basilicas excavated are the cathedral church at Curium and two smaller basilicas *extra muros* of this city. The basilicas brought to light at Amathous, Paphos and the unidentified city on Cape Drepanos, at Ayia Trias Yalousas and at Ayios Philon, Rizokarpaso, are three-aisled and of smaller dimensions. All the basilicas were timber-roofed. Their floors were paved with mosaics and later, in the sixth century, with large marble flagstones (Saint Epiphanios and Kampanopetra at Salamis), or *opus sectile* (cathedral at Curium, Basilica A *extra muros* at Curium, Saint Philon,

The church of Saint Eulalios at Lambousa. Single-aisled with dome. 16th century.
Now used by the Turks as an ammunition store.

The basilica at Soloi. View from the east.

The half-ruined church of Saint George Afentrika at Rizokarpaso.
Single-aisled with dome and two apses. 10th-11th century.

Virgin Afentrika etc.). The apses of the basilicas, and perhaps other parts of them, were decorated with mosaics. Unfortunately the Arab incursions in the seventh and eighth centuries, frequent earthquakes as well as conflagrations, as noted in the inscription found in the atrium of the basilica at Soloi, destroyed both the buildings and their decoration. Nevertheless, mural mosaics have survived in the apses of three timber-roofed basilicas that were incorporated in Middle Byzantine churches.

The greater part of the decoration in the apse of the church of the Virgin Kanakaria was preserved. On a gold ground and in a paradisaical landscape the Virgin was depicted enthroned and holding the Christ-Child, within an effulgent mandorla, between the archangels Michael and Gabriel. A broad decorative band originally enclosed thirteen medallions with the figures of the twelve apostles and Christ or the Cross. In the apse of the church of the Virgin Kyra, near the village of Livadi in Karpass, the Virgin was represented on a gold ground in the apse, standing, orans and without Christ. In the apse of the church of the Virgin Angeloktiste the Theotokos is depicted on a gold ground in a precursory type of the Hodegetria, flanked by the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Despite some influences from the East, these mosaics express the art of Constantinople and continue the Graeco-Roman tradition.

A half-ruined mosaic, found in the conch of an annexe of the cathedral at Curium, and a wall-painting in the Hagiasma of Nicodemos at Salamis, survive from the period before the Arab raids.

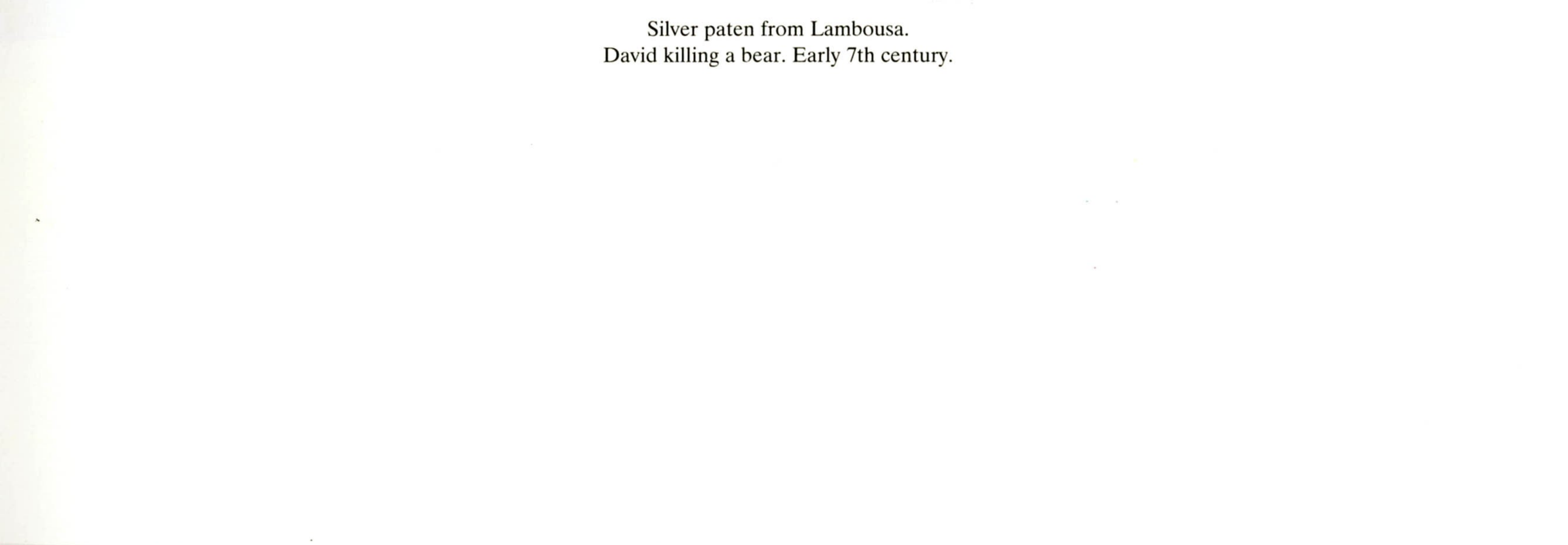
After the seventh century and throughout the period of the Arab raids (7th-10th century) the ecclesiastical architecture of Cyprus underwent radical changes, even though timber-roofed basilicas continued during the second half of the seventh and the eighth century (intermediate basilicas of Kanakaria, Saint Spyridon, Saint Heracleidios). From the eighth century, vaulted-roofed basilicas were constructed, the aisles in which are separated by built pillars upholding arches, such as the basilicas of the Virgin and the Asomatoi at Afentrika Rizokarpaso, the Virgin Syka south-west of Rizokarpaso, and Saint Barbara to the south of Korovia.

Other architectural types were introduced at this time, such as the cross-in-square church with dome (Saint Anthony at Kellia, Saint Philon at Rizokarpaso), with three domes over the nave (Apostle Barnabas, the church built in the passage leading from the nave to the baptistery of the basilica of Saint Epiphanios

Silver paten from Lambousa.
David receiving Samuel's messenger. Early 7th century.

Rizokarpaso. The ancient harbour with the Early Christian church of Saint Philon
in the background right.

Silver paten from Lambousa.
David killing a bear. Early 7th century.



The ruined basilica of the Virgin Afentrika at Rizokarpaso.

at Salamis and the five-domed church of Saint Paraskeve at Geroskipou). Small vaulted-roofed churches were also built, such as Saint Solomone near Komi tou Yalou.

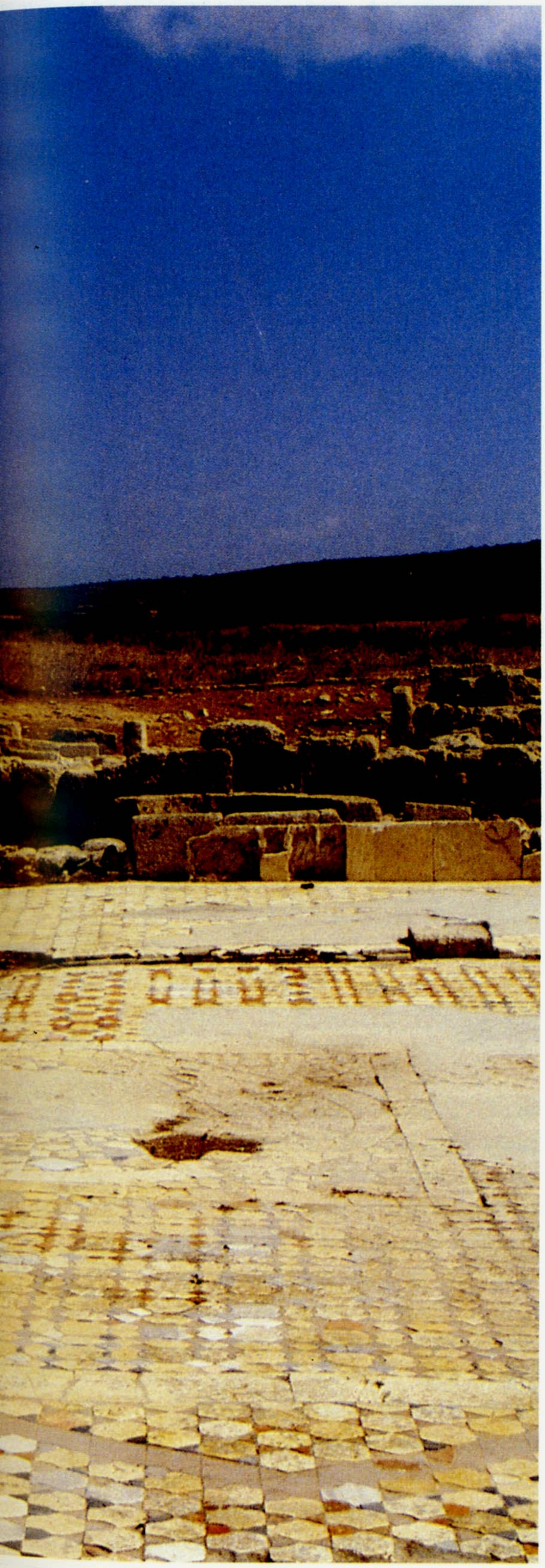
Unfortunately very few examples of painting have survived from this period: the half-destroyed decoration in the east dome of the nave in the church of Saint Paraskeve at Geroskipou, the remnants of the wall-painting of the Ascension and of an angel in the rock-hewn church of Saint Maura Chrysokava at Kyrenia, and the wall-paintings in the chapel of Saint Solomone near Komi tou Yalou. Most of these have been plundered by the Turks and parts of the wall-paintings were found recently in the possession of the Turk Aydin Dikmen in Munich.

In 965 Cyprus was incorporated in the Byzantine Empire and from the late eleventh century it constituted a highly important military base, on account of the loss of Asia Minor after the defeat of Emperor Romanos Diogenes at Manzikert in 1071 and the penetration of the Seljuk Turks as far as the shores of the Aegean, as well as the beginning of the Crusades. The Comnenos emperors fortified the island and sent trusted friends as governors. These dignitaries built churches and monasteries which were decorated by painters from Constantinople.

Widely disseminated architectural types were the cross-in-square with dome (Saint Philon and Saint Synesios at Rizokarpaso, Saint George Chortakion at Sotira, Virgin Angeloktiste at Kiti, Acheiropoietos at Lambousa, Saint Nicholas at Stegi, Virgin Pergaminiotissa at Akanthos etc.) and the aisleless with dome (Virgin at Trikomo, Virgin Chortakiotissa at Sotira, Virgin at Arakos etc.). In the late eleventh century churches of free cruciform plan (Virgin Kyra at Livadi, Saint George Koile etc.) and of octagon plan (katholikon of the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom and the Monastery of Christ

Christ Pantocrator, the Deesis, the Preparation of the Throne (Last Judgement) and angels.
Wall-paintings in the dome of the church of the Virgin at Trikomo. First decade of the 10th century.
Pointed out by the Turks as an exemplar of their protection of Byzantine monuments in the occupied territory.

Rizokarpaso. The basilica of Saint Philon on the north coast of the peninsula. The atrium and the baptistery.
In front are the ruins of a church of cross-in-square type with dome, 10th or 11th century.



Saint Endoxos. Wall-painting in the holy bema of the Antiphonetes church. Late 12th century.

Saint Simon the Stylite. Wall-painting in the holy bema of the Antiphonetes church. Late 12th century.

Saint Daniel the Stylite. Wall-painting in the holy bema of the Antiphonetes church. Late 12th century.

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The Virgin Hodegetria. Icon from the church of the Holy Girdle at Famagusta. 16th century. Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

7117

The Entry into Jerusalem. Icon from the church of Saint Luke at Famagusta. 18th century. Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

Antiphonetes, Saint Hilarion Kastro, Virgin at Margi Kyrenia) were introduced. The unique church of hexagon plan, the Virgin Apsinthiotissa, was built at that time. Although the domed octagon church is considered a creation of Constantinople, the masonry does not display notable influence from the Capital. Brick-pattern masonry only features in the small, aisleless, domed chapel of the Holy Trinity, annexed to the octagon-plan katholikon of the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom at Koutsoventis, and there it is confined to the dome. There is abundant use of fired bricks in the masonry of this chapel and the number of windows in the dome increases to twelve. Brick-pattern masonry is also used in the dome of the church of Saint Nicholas at Stegi.

Vaulted-roofed churches of small dimensions were built too (Virgin at Asinou, Saint Marina at Pyrgos Yalousa and Saint George at Sakka near Yalousa). Only one multi-domed church was constructed in this period, specifically in the twelfth century (Saints Barnabas and Hilarion at Peristeronas, Nicosia).

Common characteristic of all types of churches in the Middle Byzantine period is that they were built initially without narthex. The existing narthexes were added later, some time in the twelfth century.

The churches erected by Byzantine governors or even with the aid of the emperors themselves were decorated by well-known painters, specially invited from Constantinople. These artists hired local painters as assistants, who thus had the opportunity not only of perfecting their technique but also of becoming acquainted with the iconography and style current in the imperial capital. So in the early twelfth century both monumental painting (chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostom, katholikon of the Monastery

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All Saints. Icon from the church of Saint Marina Kythrea. 18th-19th century. Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

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Saints Bartholomew and Simon. Icon from the katholikon of the Tochnion Monastery at Mandres, Famagusta. 18th century. Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

of the Virgin Apsinthiotissa, church of the Virgin Afentrika at Koutsoventis, the Virgin at Asinou, the Virgin at Trikomo etc.) and icon painting developed apace (icons of Saint John the Baptist from Asinou, of the Virgin of Tenderness from Chrysaliniotissa).

Attacks on Cyprus in the mid-twelfth century (by Renaud de Chatillon, Count Raymond of Tripoli and the Egyptian fleet) brought economic recession and there is a lack of monuments, wall-paintings and icons dating from these years.

The heyday enjoyed in the early twelfth century is observed again in the last quarter of the century. It was then that another important painter, Theodoros Apsevdis, came to Cyprus. He worked in the Enkleistra of Saint Neophytos in 1183 and very possibly in the church of the Virgin Arakos in 1192. In all probability he also painted five important icons which have survived to this day: Christ Philanthropos, the Virgin Eleousa in the Enkleistra, Christ and the Virgin Arakiotissa in the church of the Virgin Arakiotissa, and the bema doors in the church of the Cross at Lefkara. Other late twelfth-century wall-paintings are clearly influenced by the art of Theodoros Apsevdis (in the churches of Christ Antiphonetes, Saint Philon at Agridia, Saint Marina at Pyrgos Yalousa etc.). So late Comnenian painting reached Cyprus, where it continued to flourish for many years after the island's conquest by the Franks in 1191 and its severance from Byzantium.

In 1191 Cyprus was captured by Richard I King of England, who first sold it to the Knights Templar and later to the deposed king of Jerusalem, Guy de Lusignan. In 1192 the Medieval kingdom of Cyprus was created, which lived on until 1489, when Venice assumed control of the island. The installation of the Frankish kingdom of Cyprus had serious

Saint George. Wall-painting in the church of Saint Philon Agridia, Rizokarpaso.

Saint John Chrysostom. Wall-painting in the church of Saint Philon Agridia, Rizokarpaso.

Saint John the Baptist. Wall-painting in the church of Saint Philon Agridia, Rizokarpaso.

consequences for the development of Byzantine art. The Catholic Church was established in Cyprus, whereas the Orthodox Church was deprived of its property and subjected gradually, at least externally, to the Pope. Restrictions were imposed on founding monasteries and on brethren in existing ones, while Pope Alexander IV's *Bulla Cypria* of 1260 abolished the Orthodox archbishop and the bishops, except four. Their sees were removed from the towns and were subject to the Catholic Archbishop of Nicosia and the Catholic bishops of Limassol, Famagusta and Paphos. The last Orthodox Archbishop, Germanos Pesimandros, was forced to settle in Soleas, the bishop of Amathous (Limassol) in Lefkara, of Paphos in Arsinoe (present town of Chrysochoi) and of Famagusta in Rizokarpaso.

Despite the occasional bishops who consciously submitted to the Pope, the Orthodox Church in Cyprus remained loyal to the Orthodox dogma. Both the clergy and the laity reacted strongly to every attempt at forced subjugation to the Pope, as borne out by the martyrdom of thirteen monks at Kantara in 1231, and by the uprising of the commonfolk of Nicosia and the attack on the Catholic church of Holy Wisdom (1359) when the papal legate Peter Thomas tried to coerce the Orthodox bishops to submit to the Pope by annointing them with myrrh. The maintenance of Orthodoxy also preserved the Greek identity of the people and supported efforts to reunite the Orthodox Church of Cyprus with the other Orthodox Churches. In the early fifteenth century these attempts failed, but in time the Orthodox bishops returned to the towns. From the fourteenth century already, and after the Council of Ferrara-Florence, they had apostatized from the Latin bishops and ceased to be obedient to them. The Orthodox clergy, priests and prelates, made a significant contribution to the development of art and especially painting, as attested by the donor inscriptions and portraits preserved in wall-paintings and icons.

With the loss of the Frankish possessions in Syria and of Acre in Palestine there was an influx to Cyprus not only of western adventurers and monks, but also of Syrian Orthodox Christians who brought with them their own aesthetic conceptions. From the thirteenth century a local school in architecture and painting began to

The church of Saint Solomone. 8th century.
Plundered and its wall-paintings removed.

The Resurrection (Early Christian type). Wall-painting in the church of Saint Solomone. 9th century.
The Turks removed the heads of the angels. The wall-painting was found in Munich, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen.
At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

The Apostle Barnabas Monastery, nowadays used as a museum. Icons are housed in the church and the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection of antiquities is exhibited in the rooms of the monastery.

emerge. Church architecture was influenced by the Gothic order, introduced by the Frankish conquerors, although types used during the previous period continued to be reproduced. As a rule smaller churches were built, with lancet arches, careful masonry of square ashlar blocks and doorframes at first simple and later elaborate (Saint Demetrianos and Saint George at Dali, Saint James at Trikomo, Saint Nicholas of the Greeks and Holy Girdle (Hagia Zone) in Famagusta, Virgin at Trapeza near Acheritou, Saint Themonianos at Lysi etc.). A singular architectural type was created, combining the Gothic basilica with the Byzantine dome, though this was not widely diffused. Examples are the fourteenth-century Orthodox cathedrals in Famagusta (Saint George of the Greeks) and Nicosia (Virgin Hodegetria).

The Byzantine art of Cyprus was influenced by Eastern elements, together with some traits of the so-called 'Crusader' painting. This is apparent from the wall-paintings in the katholikon of the Monastery of Saint John Lampadistes, the church of the Virgin at Moutoulla and of the Saviour at Sotira, Famagusta, as well as from the thirteenth-century icons of Christ, Saint John the Baptist, the Virgin from Moutoulla etc.

In the fourteenth century contacts with Byzantium were more frequent, on account of the hesychastic controversy. Many opponents of Gregory Palamas sought refuge in Cyprus, while the leaders of the Hesychasts also corres-

ponded with Cypriot bishops. Cypriot monks and painters visited Constantinople and so were exposed to Palaeologan painting. A series of wall-paintings and icons expresses the Palaeologan renaissance, among them the wall-paintings in the Holy Cross at Pelentri, the architrave from the church of the Virgin Theoskepaste, which is now in the katholikon of the Monastery of Saint John Lampadistes at Kalopanayotis, the icon of Christ from the church of Christ Antiphonetes, which is in the Paphos Byzantine Museum, the double-sided icon of the Descent from the Cross and the Virgin from Kalopanayotis, Christ (1356) and Saint Eleutherios from the church of the Chrysaliniotissa etc.

In 1570 the Ottoman army captured Cyprus. It massacred the population, took men, women and children as prisoners, plundered churches and houses, and imposed obscurantism. In 1585 the monasteries were seized and sold. The Cypriot people and the Orthodox Church were obliged to buy them back. The building of new churches was banned and existing ones could not be repaired without the permission of the Ottoman authorities. Many churches, Catholic and Orthodox, were converted into mosques. Very few churches were built during the 300 years of Ottoman Occupation, mainly of aisleless vaulted-roofed or timber-roofed type, and only three churches of aisleless with dome type.

Many painters were slain in the carnage that followed the conquest of Cyprus in 1570. Almost all of those that survived left the island and settled elsewhere, such as Ioannis the Cypriot in Venice, Ioannis Adolos in Constantinople, Onouphrios the Cypriot in Albania. Consequently painting declined and diminished. The style changed completely. The four or five extant icons are overtly influenced by the art of the East.

It seems that the known Cypriot painters of the seventeenth century (Pavlos the *hierographos*, Demetrios the priest, Thomas the preacher, Leontios the hieromonk, Ioannikios and others) had been taught by painters in Asia Minor.

From the second half of the sixteenth and mainly in the seventeenth century, icons began to be imported from the Greek workshops in Venice. Icons by Emmanuel Tzanfournaris, Theodoros Poulakis, the priest Emmanuel Tzane Bounialis, as well as by other Cretan painters whose works are unsigned, were sent to Cyprus by affluent members of the Cypriot community in Venice, who had settled there after the Ottoman conquest. The combination of the local painting and the imported painting from Venice led to the formation of a very important school of painting in the period of the Ottoman Occupation, the school of the Saint Heracleidios Monastery. Created in the late seventeenth century and continuing to produce until the early decades of the nineteenth, its most notable representative is Archimandrite Leontios. In the seventeenth century Michael the Thessalonikan or the Thessalian (Thettalos), a painter srongly influenced by contemporary Russian painting, came to Cyprus. His Cypriot pupil Michael Proskynitis, who filled Cyprus with portable icons, painted until the age of 98. In the late eighteenth century Ioannis Kornaros came to Cyprus from Crete. He painted mainly panel icons but also a few wall-paintings in the Kykkos Monastery. So renowned was his work that it too created a school, which eventually overshadowed the local tradition and prevailed throughout the nineteenth century.

Monumental painting was almost completely abandoned during the Ottoman period. There are no whole painting ensembles from the seventeenth century. Only isolated wall-paintings are preserved, executed by artists who primarily painted icons. The same is true of the eighteenth century. The only complete painting ensemble from the Ottoman period is in the church of Saint John the Theologian in Nicosia. Although decoration of the monument commenced in the time of Archbishop Silvester (only the Akathistos Hymn was painted and a few figures of single saints in the holy bema), it was his successor, Archbishop Philotheos, who zealously supervised its completion. Systematic work began in 1734 and continued until at least 1750. This is the only church from the Ottoman period that is adorned fully with wall-paintings.

Orthodox churches that were turned into mosques during the period of the Ottoman Occupation (1570-1878):

1. Saint Catherine, Palaiokythro.
2. Saint Nicholas, Trachoni.
3. Saint Mark(?), Klavdia.
4. Saint Basil, Petra.
5. Saint George, Episkopi.
6. Saint Andronikos, Poli.
7. Church of unknown name, Timi.
8. Church of unknown name, Chrysochou.
9. Church of unknown name, Pelathousa.
10. Church of unknown name, Paphos.
11. Church of unknown name (Tuzla Camii), Larnaca.
12. Church of unknown name (Kebir Camii), Larnaca.
13. Church of unknown name (Kebir Camii), Limassol.
14. Holy Cross, Nicosia.
15. Church of unknown name at the harbour of Kyrenia.
16. Saint Nicholas, Paphos.

In 1963 the Turks converted the church of Saint Nicholas in Paphos – which had been turned into a mosque – into a gun emplacement. When the Turkish mutiny against the authorities broke in 1964, the Cypriot police were forced to blow it up in order to save lives.

Bema door from the katholikon of the Monastery of the Virgin at Kantara. 17th century.

7124

Emblem of the Republic of Cyprus.

The flag of the Republic of Cyprus.

Bronze coin bearing the inscription KOINON OF CYPRIOTS. Roman period.

The Republic of Cyprus

The Repulic of Cyprus was born after the Zurich-London agreements, on 16 August 1960, with the passing of The Cyprus Act by the British parliament and by Order in Council of the British Crown. So the constitution and the other accompanying agreements were put into force. For the first time in its history Cyprus became a state, with the late Archbishop Makarios as its first president.

The historical course of Cyprus, which culminated in the 1960 act of independence, was a checkered one. After 307 years of Ottoman rule the island became the object of a mercantile transaction, for the second time in its history. The 'buyers' this time (1878) were the British, in contrast to 1191, when King Richard I of England, having conquered Cyprus, sold and resold it. British sovereignty over Cyprus had on the one hand political content, that is the British Empire's protection of the then bankrupt Ottoman Empire, and on the other commercial, the annual payment of £92,800 sterling or 4,166,000 okas of salt. There were of course other reasons, for as the geographer Bordone wrote in 1528: 'The location of this noble island is better than any other'. Thus the geopolitical position of Cyprus has always been its charm for various conquerors and imperialists. This fact has never changed.

Britain annexed Cyprus in 1914, when Turkey became an enemy power in the First World War. The annexation was ratified by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, with retroactive force from 1914. It is not only the Greek Cypriots who say that British rule was both oppressive – the majority of renowned historians confirm this – and pro-Turkish, for obvious reasons. The natural desire for a Greek solution led in due course to the 1931 uprising, which was quashed, and then to the armed, open rebellion in 1955-1959. It should be noted that the Council of Europe's Commission of Human Rights, to which Greece resorted against Britain at that time, found that serious transgressions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights had been perpetrated by the British authorities in Cyprus.

It is characteristic that the Commission, accepting the common application of the parties for termination of the process, after the Zurich-London agreements, mentioned that such a termination should satisfy the Commission; that it should serve the cause of human rights and respect the Convention. It is not certain whether the Zurich-London agreements of 11 and 19 February 1959 respectively, had that conceptual legal content. They were rather the imperative result of the political conjunctures of the time and were signed as an alternative solution to Macmillan's partitionist plan. The constitution of Cyprus was drafted on the basis of these agreements and Cyprus was declared 'a sovereign and independent state'. However, the sovereignty and independence of Cyprus was placed *ab initio* under relevant restrictions.

I shall not attempt to evaluate here the pros and cons of signing these agreements, but shall merely outline their constitutional aspects, with their intractible peculiarities. The British Professor S.A. de Smith has observed that those who are unaware of the political realities might well ask whether the underlying principles of the Consititution of Cyprus and the detailed clauses it contains were conceived in a nightmarish dialogue between a constitutional lawyer and a mathematician. He also adds that the Cypriot Constitution is possibly the most rigid in the world.

Although another small state was created, with territory, people and sovereignty, which tried to find its way in the international community, it harboured within it the seed of a possible split. These factors, together with the interests of larger neighbouring powers, simultaneously charted its future. One of the greatest weaknesses of small states is their weak internal institutional structure, which makes them vulnerable to external threats. Cyprus was endowed with institutional weakness from the outset.

Numerous constitutional problems arose. Tax laws were not voted in and the endeavour to create divided municipalities had paralytic consequences. There was a rash of appeals against the constitution. Inspired by an attempt to satisfy *Realpolitik* needs and ignoring classical principles of democratic constitutional practice, the constitution proved incapable of providing a solution to political impasses. These therefore remained, exacerbating the already strained relations between the two ethnic groups of the Cypriot people, the two communities.

A permanent mistrust between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, inherited from the recent past and craftily cultivated by British diplomacy, contributed to this state of affairs, as did the lack of inclination by both to adapt to the historical *status quo*. The Greek Cypriot side perhaps did not show the necessary flexibility, though this would have made it increasingly captive to the will of the minority. The Turkish Cypriots had their shortcomings too, by trying to impose as stringently as possible whatever disintegrational clauses there were in the constitution, to serve the strategic needs of Turkey.

It is safe to criticize with hindsight, and conflicting views are heard all the time. I shall venture an objective approach: both communities failed to create mutual 'trust'. We Greek Cypriots are convinced of our right, the right of the majority; conversely, the Turkish Cypriots were convinced of the dynamic support of Turkey. President Makarios's efforts to introduce constitutional amendments, the 13 points, were to no avail and the inter-communal clashes of December 1963 that followed signified a basic constitutional turmoil. The disturbances between December 20 and 27 1963 resulted in the first 'green line'.

Constitutional order in Cyprus and the continued functioning of the constitutional bodies after 1963 were based, correctly, on the 'law of necessity', which meant basically that for the country's salvation and survival the institutions would operate differently for a time, until its return to normality. On the basis of this legal doctrine, which is accepted internationally and was affirmed in judicial decisions of other countries, constitutional order was kept alive in Cyprus and the legality of its government. The persistent effort of Turkish policy to impose political and military control on Cyprus is reflected in the systematic voluntary withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriots into 'enclaves', with the aim of imposing partitionist solutions. United Nations mediator, Galo Plaza, made exactly these ascertainments on Turkish policy during his mission and describes them in his 1965 report.

The republic of Cyprus survived both internally as a constitutional public order and in International Law as a state.

In the field of International Law the Republic of Cyprus was recognized unreservedly as a sovereign and independent state and was received immediately into the international family as a member of the United Nations Organization, an equal member of the Commonwealth and a member of the Council of Europe.

The restrictions imposed on the exercise of full sovereignty by the Zurich-London agreements, and incorporated in the constitution, in article 181, which stipulates that: 'The Treaty of Guarantee ... as well as the treaty of military alliance ... acquire constitutional force ...', and 182, which states that the fundamental articles of the Constitution 'cannot be amended in any way, through change, addition or abolition', did not constitute obstacles to the Republic's international recognition.

Such restrictions occur in other international treaties that founded other states and are explained by historical circumstances. Neverthess, it should be emphasized that the Treaty of Guarantee in particular is considered generally to be contrary to the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Authoritative authors such as Professor James Crawford characterize it as at least of doubtful validity.

The constitutional negotiations from 1964 to 1974 will not be discussed here. Much has been said about the possibility of a solution, which according to one version reached a climax in 1974, before the *coup d'état* and the invasion. Many say that opportunities were lost, others believe that since Turkish expansionist policy acquired certain political and military advantages it was not inclined to make concessions.

The events of 1974 followed, a major shock to the foundations of the Republic of Cyprus; the reckless *coup d'état* against Makarios, organized by the Greek junta, the invasion, and the unilateral declaration of a 'state' in the occupied northern part of Cyprus. The *coup d'état* of 15 July 1974 was from a political and military standpoint a treasonable attempt to overthrow constitutional order in the Republic of Cyprus.

The eight-day presence of a *coup* government in the Republic was only a temporary and not a permanent disruption of constitutional order. It did not manage to impose itself as a 'revolution', which would have meant the annulment of the 1960 constitution. Constitutional order was restored quickly and so there was no vacuum. Indeed all the acts of those eight days were *a primo* illegal, invalid and with absolutely no force. The Republic's international status was not affected, according to the correct legal interpretation. The period of the *coup d'état* did not interrupt either the sovereignty or the independence of the Republic, which were restored fully with the return of Archbishop Makarios.

But the postern gate had been opened. Even if Turkey's ambitions had already been formulated, it is with the justification of the *coup d'état*, of the overthrow of constitutional order, that the military invasion was launched.

So the question arises whether the military invasion by Turkey, the continuing occupation of part of Cyprus and the declaration of 'an independent state' to which Denktash proceeded, create any pretext for a permanent partition of Cyprus or the possibility of recognition of any organizational or administrative construct in the northern part of the island.

The international rules governing hostile martial occupation are codified in the Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Hague Regulations of 1907. The Geneva Convention applies in all cases of declaration of war, as well as, according to article 2, in all cases of military occupation (partial or total) of territory of a signatory member (Cyprus has been a member since 1962, Turkey since 1954).

War was not declared officially in 1974, but there was undeniably an 'armed conflict', and Turkey submitted a declaration to the International Red Cross that it abides by the rules of the Internationl Law on Warfare and the Geneva Convention. The Hague Regulations, which are accepted as part of the recognized law, state that: 'territory is considered to be under occupation when in reality it is placed under the military occupation of an enemy army'.

The northern part of Cyprus was certainly part of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus in 1974. This cannot be denied by either supporters of the Turkish puppet Raouf Denktash or the countries which know and respect International Law.

The sovereignty and the international recognition of the Republic of Cyprus have also been affirmed by Resolution 364 (1974) of the Security Council of the United Nations. The existence of military occupation was confirmed subsequently by Resolution 541 of the same Security Council. It was also confirmed by the Commission of Human Rights of the Council of Europe.

This view of military occupation is generally accepted today and has been ascertained many times by the General Assembly of the United Nations (e.g. Resolution 37/253 of 1983). It was also accepted by the British Parliament in the Report of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, 1986-1987, which states in paragraph 99 that: 'in our opinion – which is clearly shared by the greater part of the international community – the expansion and consolidation of the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus, from August 1974 onwards, was illegal on the basis of the 1960 Agreements and the clauses of the United Nations Charter and of International Law in general'.

Turkey struggles obstinately to refute this objective evaluation of the situation as a continuing military invasion and occupation. It wants to be acquitted quickly and directly of the charge of illegal 'military occupation'. After that recognition will be easy.

Is recognition possible despite the military occupation? Can Denktash's pseudo-state proceed to recognition without first ridding itself of this burden imposed by International Law? The answer is clear: NO. International Law and the practice of states, primarily in

Europe and the USA, rule out such a possibility. The illegality of the military occupation creates an obligation of non-recognition on third states. Fortunately the principle still applies in International Law that: 'An entity which seeks the substance of a state, but which was created in a period of military occupation, is assumed not to be independent. This presumption of fact is particularly strict when the military occupation is a result of illegal invasion'. The argument that the unilateral declarations of a 'Federal State' and a 'Republic' differentiate the state of military occupation was presented during the hearings before the Commission of Human Rights, in Cyprus's appeal against Turkey. The argument was rejected by both the Commission and the Court of Human Rights. It was decided that the government of the Republic of Cyprus has been prevented from exercising its jurisdiction in the northern part of the country since 1974 on account of the presence of Turkish troops, and that any regime that has been installed cannot be considered as a legal body or state that exercises legal jurisdiction. This was also repeated by the Court of the European Community. Right is never born from illegality.

The thirty-eight year-old Republic of Cyprus continues to exist, despite the shocks it has suffered in its course. It was recognized by the international community in 1960 as a subject of International Law, whose international personality and sovereignty continue unchanged. It now proceeds hopefully towards membership of the European Union with the full backing of Greece. This offers a new opening which should be exploited correctly and methodically, with a unified policy, a single internal front. International Law is one and stable and universal. It is the product of the same stable, universal and pan-human values which hold of course for Cyprus too.

Kypros Chrysostomides
Lawyer

Flag of the Cypriot freedom-fighters in 1821,
with the inscription GREEK FLAG - HOMELAND OF CYPRUS.

Nicosia. The Green Line.

International Law and the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Cyprus

It is now widely accepted that protection of the cultural heritage is a *sine qua non* of civilization. As such it is also the object of important international conventions. From the standpoint of International Law, the issue of the protection of the cultural heritage of Cyprus is unequivocal.

Certainly in the case of Cyprus the regulations concerning the behaviour of the parties involved are directly related to the legal status of the part of the island occupied for the past twenty-four years. Since July-August 1974 this territory has been subject to a regime of illegal military occupation by a foreign power, established in violation of International Law and in particular of article 2 paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter, which outlaws the use of force in international relations.

The armed attack, invasion, capture and occupation of Cypriot territory by Turkey constitutes the most serious violation known of international legal order. The International Law Commission of the United Nations, in its bill on the international repsonsibility of states, calls the armed attack an 'international crime' (article 19 paragraphs 2 and 3a), while decision no. 3314 of the 1974 General Assembly of the United Nations, which includes the definition of attack, considers it 'a crime against international peace'. This illegality has peculiar gravity, since it stems from the violation of a rule of International Law – the principle that force should not be used in international relations – which has *jus cogens* character, of compulsory law. Rules of this category have increased legal power and override all other rules of International Law, conventional and customary. Furthermore, they can only be amended by rules that are also of *jus cogens* character.

In the case of armed attack, there are three essential consequences of the unlawful act:

1. The succession of state is prohibited in territory captured illegally by force, that is there can be no transfer of sovereignty to the conqueror or to its subrogate. So, in the case of Cyprus sovereignty remains in the state whose territory has been captured, the Republic of Cyprus.
2. It is incumbent on third states, international organizations, the subjects of International Law in general, not to recognize annexations of territory captured illegally by use of force, nor the quasi-state authorities established in these.
3. The commitment of the illegality, that is the hostile act, entails the international responsibility of the state in breach of the law, in our case the responsibility of Turkey towards the Republic of Cyprus.

This article will not attempt – nor could it in so little space – to present analytically Turkey's violations of International Law, or of human rights, during the invasion of Cyprus and the long period of occupation. It will deal with a more specific issue, Turkey's violation of International Law with regard to the cultural heritage of Cyprus. Even so, Turkey has transgressed so many of the more specific international texts by plundering and destroying the monuments of the civilization of Cyprus, that it is difficult to deal with them fully.

A. The first international agreement violated by Turkey is article 56 of the Regulation Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, which is appended to the fourth Hague Convention of 1907 and is applied in the case of military occupation. This states that: *The property of municipalities, that of institutions*

dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts and sciences, even when State property shall be treated as private property. Consequently this property should be respected absolutely, just as private property, in accordance with article 56 of the Regulation. Indeed article 56 obliges the occupying power to prosecute those guilty of acts against it: *Every seizure of, destruction or wilful damage done to institutions of this character, historic monuments, works of art and science, is forbidden, and should be made the subject of legal proceedings.*

It is accepted that this article of the 1907 Hague Regulation, which is very comprehensive and protects all cultural property, has for some time acquired a customary foundation and so binds all states, including of course Turkey.

B. The second basic international agreement is the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, to which Cyprus (1964), Turkey (1965) and Greece (1981) are contracting parties.

This Convention presents certain interesting characteristics. First it provides a particularly wide and detailed definition of cultural property, which covers movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular, archaeological sites, work of art, manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest, as well as important collections of the above property. The places in which movable cultural property is kept and exhibited, such as museums, large libraries, depositories of archives etc., as well as centres containing a large amount of cultural property, are also considered as cultural property. Even entire cities (e.g. Venice) can be counted as cultural property, on the basis of the Convention (article 1).

The second characteristic of the Convention is its very wide field of application. It covers all cases of armed conflicts: declared war, any other international armed conflict, even if the state of war is not recognized as such by one or more of the contributors; it even covers internal armed conflicts, civil wars. Moreover, it is applied *in toto* in every case of partial or total occupation of the territory of one of the high contracting parties (articles 18-19), which aspect is of special interest for the Cyprus issue.

The Convention stipulates the obligations of the high contracting parties towards cultural property. In a first stage, during the course of hostilities, it establishes the principle of respect for the cultural property of the adversary, whereby each high contracting party is obliged to refrain from every hostile act towards this property. There is only one exception to this rule (which has however been strongly censured): the case in which military necessity demands action at the expense of cultural property, and only to the degree that this is imperative.

In the second stage, the case of occupation – which again directly concerns the situation in Cyprus – the Convention is more detailed, stricter and more explicit, since it allows of no exception. Article 4 paragraph 3 states that the occupying power – in the present case Turkey – undertakes: *to prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property.* It also prohibits the requisitioning of cultural property or reprisals against it by the occupying power.

In the event of violation of this rule, the high contracting parties are obliged to take, within the framework of their legal system, all necessary measures in order to press charges, penal or disciplinary, against the persons responsible, whatever their nationality (article 28). Nevertheless it should be observed that on the issue of penal sanctions the Convention is somewhat vague: unfortunately it does not specify, as is foreseen by modern conventions of penal character, a series of offences (in particular the offence of looting cultural property) which ought to be considered international crimes and ought to be prosecuted by all contracting parties without exception.

Last, and equally important, the 1954 Hague Convention is accompanied by an optional Protocol (to which both the Republic of Cyprus and Turkey are contracting parties) that lays down a series of additional obligations, primarily:

1. The obligation of the occupying power to prevent the export of cultural property from the territory it occupies.
2. The obligation of every third state to return to the responsible authorities of the occupied state the cultural property that was in its territory and had been exported illicitly, in violation of the first principle.

In each case, especially for the obligation to return or render cultural property after armed conflicts, there is in international practice a series of precedents. So it can be maintained in theory that apart from the conven-

Nicosia. The Green Line.

tional regulations embodied in the Hague Protocol, customary rules compulsory for all states have already been established as well. Included in this practice is the return to Cyprus of the Kanakaria mosiacs, after a legal battle in the USA (see pp. 146-150 and 154-167).

C. The third international agreement, equally important for the case of Cyprus, is the clause of article 53 of the Ist Additional Protocol to the 1949 Geneva Conventions – also signed in Geneva in 1977 – which stipulates that: *Without prejudice to the provisions of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict of 14 May 1954, and other relevant international instruments, it is prohibited* (and in this respect the clause does not prejudice existing International Law but supplements and reinforces it) *to commit any acts of hostility directed against the historic monuments, works of art or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples.*

Cyprus and Greece are contracting parties to this Protocol, but not Turkey, for reasons obviously associated with the illegal acts it has perpetrated against the cultural heritage of Cyprus since 1974.

D. Moreover, Turkey is not a contracting party to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Export, Import and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. In contrast to the previous agreements, this Convention is applied in peacetime, but it also recognizes expressly in article 11 that those acts due directly or indirectly to the occupation of territory by a foreign power are illegal.

E. Apart from these conventions, it should be stressed emphatically that Turkey directly violated the cultural rights of the Greek Cypriots, and primarily those driven out of their ancestral homes after the Turkish invasion. Turkey imposed radical ethnic cleans-

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ing of the occupied sector of the island, an act which the whole world condemns unanimously as inhuman, primitive and criminal.

Cultural rights belong specifically to the sphere of human rights and are therefore safeguarded by the acts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, former CSCE), and mainly by the 1990 Paris Charter and the text of the 1991 Cracow Conference. These rights are inextricably linked with cultural property and were violated precisely because the latter, which constitutes perhaps the most essential component of the cultural identity of the Greek Cypriot people, has been destroyed, stolen, plundered, despoiled.

It emerges from the plethora of relevant international conventions that in the sphere of International Law too, it is taken for granted that illegal acts against a country's cultural heritage do not concern that country alone but all mankind. This is stated clearly in the Preamble to the 1954 Hague Convention, while article 6 of the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage declares that: *such heritage constitutes a world heritage, for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to co-operate.*

Cyprus has taken and continues to take measures to save its cultural heritage, mainly through the appropriate international organization, UNESCO, but so far without substantial results. It is true that UNESCO and indeed other international bodies avoid political 'trouble spots' and tend to play down their role as much as they can when things get difficult. However, care for the cultural heritage is an essential duty and a fundamental right of every enlightened citizen, of every free person. It is an obligation of us all.

Constantine Economidès
Professor, Panteion University Athens

Repatriated antiquities
from the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.
Now exhibited in the Archaeological Museum, Nicosia.

Ancient Cypriot vases from the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.
These looted objects are nowadays exhibited by the Turkish Cypriots in the Apostle Barnabas Monastery.

The Looting of Private Collections

In late 1963 to early 1964 the Turks in Cyprus had withdrawn to their illicit enclaves and were involved with clandestine excavations and the uncontrolled sale of antiquities. For them grave-robbing and illegal trading in antiquities were a profession and a way of life. The finds were channelled abroad with the help of smugglers and some unscrupulous individuals in the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus.

The government of the Republic of Cyprus, in its efforts to curb the illegal exports of antiquities by the Turks – since it was unable to impose law and order in their enclaves – permitted the purchase of antiquities by Greek Cypriots. So most of the antiquities, and indeed the most important, remained in Cyprus. Furthermore, the island's Department of Antiquities was able to inventory, study and publish them.

This is how I began my own Collection of Antiquities, which within ten years, that is by 1973, numbered 2000 objects, covering the whole spectrum of Cypriot archaeology, from the Neolithic Age until Medieval and Byzantine times. It also included 250 choice objects of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Cypriot folk art, as well as many important Byzantine icons.

The greater part of the Collection consisted of unique objects of outstanding artistic and great archaeological value, and was considered one of the best private collections of Cypriot antiquities in the world. Until the Turkish invasion in 1974 it was kept in my home, at 22 Eleftherias Avenue, Famagusta. With the city's capture, the Collection fell into the hands of the Turks, who looted it.

In 1976 some objects from the Collection – six Chalcolithic picrolite figurines and a necklace of the same period (3500-300 BC) – appeared for sale by public auction at Christies in London. This was the first official indication that the Collection had been pillaged by the Turks.

With the assistance of the Cypriot govern-

Heads of statues of the Cypro-Archaic period, from the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.
Looted in 1974 and nowadays exhibited in the Apostle Barnabas Monastery.

A room in the Apostle Barnabas Monastery, with the exhibition of ancient Cypriot vases from the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.

Skyphos. 9th century BC. From the plundered C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.
It was located recently in a catalogue of the dealer Bonharns in London
and returned to the collector after the intervention of the British police.

ment and Interpol, the above objects were returned to me and subsequently repatriated. Other similar incidents followed, but alas the objects I have so far managed to re-acquire are very few, about forty.

Three years ago I was informed that some 850 objects from my Collection were on display in the Apostle Barnabas Monastery in Turkish-occupied Famagusta. The Turks had converted this monument into an archaeological museum. The pieces are exhibited in four large galleries and are presented in books published by the Turks as their property and part of their cultural heritage.

For a ticket costing one Cypriot pound tourists and others can visit the museum and admire and enjoy the objects in my Collection, while I, its legal owner, am denied this basic human right.

Christakis Hadjiprodromou
Collector

Ancient Cypriot bronze objects from the C. Hadjiprodromou Collection,
now exhibited in the Apostle Barnabas Monastery.

The Destruction of a Cultural Heritage

Each country, each region, has its own cultural landscape, that marriage of countryside and constructions that identifies it to inhabitants and visitors alike, and is formed through the interaction of nature and history. In the history of Cyprus over the last 1500 years – the Byzantine period and the centuries of Frankish, Venetian and Ottoman rule – by far the most significant and permanent institution, the focus and symbol of the majority community, has been the church. And this is reflected in the typical Cypriot landscape – the village or small town with its churches, the hill or valley with its monastery and chapel. Some of these buildings are very old and of architectural importance, others are less so: all, however, are part of the essence of Cyprus.

It is these churches and their contents that have been the focus of the destruction of the cultural heritage in the northern part of Cyprus, occupied since 1974. The Turkish invasion in that year achieved perhaps the most thorough instance on record of what has since become known as ethnic cleansing. Virtually the entire Greek Cypriot population in the occupied area (38% of the island's territory) was driven from its homes, to enable not only Turkish Cypriots but also immigrants from the depths of Anatolia, to settle there. Only a few thousand Greek Cypriots remained in the Karpass peninsula, a number now reduced to less than 500.

There were new developments after the invasion. Place names were changed from Greek to Turkish, very often completely new inventions rather than Turkish versions of the original toponyms. This had not happened under Ottoman rule – in fact almost all purely Turkish Cypriot villages had retained their Greek names, and many villages named after Christian saints were actually inhabited mainly by Muslims.

Some notable archaeological collections were looted. There was an orgy of clandestine digging for ancient tombs, which provided a wealth of objects to be exported and sold. The military operations of the invasion itself caused limited damage, compared with the period of systematic vandalism and random pillaging which reached its peak after 1976. All this was chronicled by some sections of the Turkish Cypriot press, which to their credit have been vigilant against the destruction of the cultural heritage.

It is the churches, those most visible symbols of Cypriot history, that have suffered most. A list of about 280 affected churches has

Head of an angel from the zone with the Deesis in the dome of the church of Saint Themonianos at Lysi. 13th century. The plundered decoration from the church's interior was sold abroad and is at present in Houston, Texas.

been compiled over the years, from the reports of foreign journalists – because the area is, of course, banned to all Greek Cypriots – and the Turkish Cypriot press, while very many instances of damage go unrecorded. A few ecclesiastical buildings have been completely demolished, some have been vandalized and neglected, others turned into stables or put to even more demeaning uses. Some have been converted into military installations and others into mosques; this of course, as in other cases of change of use, involves the removal or destruction of the church's major features – icons, iconostases, wall-paintings, liturgical vessels. It is estimated that there were over 500 ecclesiastical buildings – monasteries, churches, chapels – in the occupied sector of Cyprus. Two or three in the Karpass peninsula are still in use as churches, attended by the few remaining Greek Cypriots, and three or four have been turned into museums, after their original decoration and icons were removed and replaced by later works. The vast majority of the rest have fallen victims to destruction and looting, often with the participation or connivance of the Turkish army of occupation.

Two particular cases are especially interesting from the international point of view and there is, in fact, a connection between them. The case of the wall-paintings from Saint Themonianos at Lysi is related to that of the mosaics from the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi, if only because the same Turkish (not Turkish Cypriot) dealer was involved in both. In 1983 the Embassy of Cyprus in Washington, along with the embassies of other countries in the region, received a letter from a legal firm acting for the Menil Foundation of Houston, Texas. The Foundation had been offered the wall-paintings of an entire Byzantine church and wanted to know whether there were any claims on them; photographs were attached of the paintings *in situ*, showing them about to be removed in a fairly professional manner. Two embassies replied, the Turkish, with no supporting evidence, and the Cypriot, with proof that the wall-paintings were those of the small church of Saint Themonianos or Euphemianos, outside the village of Lysi in the occupied part of Cyprus. The church, located in a field not far from the line held by the Turkish army, is in a well-patrolled military zone. There were subsequent reports that the removal of the wall-paintings, which must have taken several weeks, took place under military auspices.

There were discussions between the Menil Foundation and the Church of Cyprus, supported by the Cyprus Department of Antiquities. The Foundation representatives said that they were not in a position to disclose the whereabouts of the wall-paintings and that any attempt to trace them would entail a serious threat to their destruction. There were also suggestions that there might be personal danger for those involved if such a disclosure were made. Finally, Mme de Menil herself – a very cultured and generous lady – offered to purchase the paintings – fine works of the thirteenth or the early fourteenth century –, to restore and display them for 15 years in her Foundation's Houston Museum, and then to return them to their owner, the Church of Cyprus. An agreement was reached along these lines and the paintings, painstakingly restored and published, are now on display in a building designed specially for the purpose.

During the course of these negotiations information was received from an intermediary, who had originally offered the frescoes to the Menil Foundation, that four mosaic fragments were also in the possession of the Turkish dealer involved. These were said to be part of the world-famous sixth-century apse mosaic of the Virgin Kanakaria church in the occupied Karpass peninsula. It was pointed out to the intermediary that works of this kind were certainly not saleable and that it would be in the interest of the possessor to give them back; a few months later he telephoned to say that the Menil Foundation had indeed persuaded the person in question to deliver the four fragments to a warehouse in Frankfurt. When the Embassy of Cyprus collected them and sent them to Nicosia it was discovered that two were greatly damaged but genuine heads of apostles from the Kanakaria church, while the other two were modern compositions made up of old and new tesserae.

Several years before, in 1979, a first report, from a foreign embassy, had reached the Department of Antiquities for Cyprus that the Kanakaria mosaics – an extremely fine and rare work of the sixth century AD – were no longer in the apse of the church and that there were mosaic fragments all over the floor. The government of Cyprus publicized this information to international organizations, major museums and academic institutions all over the world. It was not clear how much of the work had survived after the removal, and when the two genuine fragments and the tesserae incorporated in the made-up pieces were returned it was thought that these were in fact all that had survived the vandalism.

However, late in 1988 a report came from the Getty Museum that it had been offered

Apostles. Details from the wall-painting of the Ascension in the rock-hewn church of Saint Marina Chrysokava at Kyrenia. 9th-10th century. Today the monument is used as a sheep fold.

AYIOS
CHURCH

The single-aisle domed church of Saint James in Nicosia, 14th-15th century. It was plundered and burnt.

some fragments of the mosaics by an auctioneer from Geneva. Early in 1989 more precise information was received from the same museum that a dealer in Indianapolis, a Ms Peg Goldberg, was in possession of four mosaic fragments, for which she was asking $20 million. It was at this point that the Church of Cyprus and the government of Cyprus took legal action in the US district court in Indianapolis.

The case and the subsequent appeals generated a great deal of media attention. Many newspaper articles were published in Cyprus and the USA, as well as in the UK, France, Germany and elsewhere, not to mention in American news-magazines. There was even a fifty-page feature in *The New Yorker* – a highly dramatized investigation of the whole story and the individuals involved. Last but not least, a TV documentary entitled *Plunder* was screened on BBC Channel 1. The Kanakaria case was naturally of great interest to UNESCO, which sent an observer to Indianapolis, as well as to countries and institutions concerned about illicit trafficking in important items of cultural property.

The case was concluded in August 1989, with the judgment of the US district court judge James Noland, which ruled that the mosaics be returned to their lawful owner, the Church of Cyprus. The defendant appealed and the appeal-court ruling, late in 1990, confirmed Judge Noland's decision in even stronger and clearer terms. In his summing up the presiding judge in the Appeal Court, Mr Bauer, quoted from Lord Byron's poem *The Siege of Corinth:*

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past and future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see,
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay!

The phrasing of his closing remarks is indicative of its tone:

As Byron's poem laments, war can reduce our grandest and most sacred temples to mere 'fragments of stone'. Only the lowest of scoundrels attempt to reap personal gain from this collective loss. Those who plundered the churches and monuments of war-torn Cyprus, hoarded their relics away, and are now smuggling and selling them for large sums, are just such blackguards. The Republic of Cyprus, with diligent effort and the help of friends like Dr True (of the Getty Museum), has been able to locate several of these stolen antiquities; items of vast cultural, religious (and, as this case demonstrates, monetary) value. Among such finds are the pieces of the Kanakaria mosaic at issue in this case. Unfortunately, when these mosaics surfaced they were in the hands not of the most guilty parties, but of Peg Goldberg and her gallery. Correctly applying Indiana law, the district court determined that Goldberg must return the mosaics to their rightful owner: the Church of Cyprus. Goldberg's tireless attacks have not established reversible error in that determination, and thus, for the reasons discussed above, the district court's judgment is AFFIRMED.

There were a number of further, briefer procedures – the last before the Supreme Court itself – and the mosaics were finally returned to Cyprus in August 1991.

An interesting feature of the Appeal Court decision was a separate concurring opinion by Judge Cudahy, that set the case more in the framework of International Law, and of various relevant treaties and conventions, rather than as an issue of ownership and theft, that had been the basis of the original judgment; in particular, the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, as well as the US Cultural Property Implementation Act. Judge Cudahy thus introduced another dimension to the Kanakaria case, a widening of the horizon which is most welcome and which has heightened public awareness of the need for international agreements and national laws to curb the destruction and theft of cultural property. It should be noted that the United States has adopted the 1970 UNESCO Convention, whereas some European countries, including Britain and France, have not. On the other hand, France has ratified the Hague Convention but the United States and Britain have not.

The international dimension of its cultural heritage has always been vital to Cyprus and it is a signatory to all the relevant international conventions, as, incidentally, is Turkey. UNESCO came into the picture at the time of the 1974 invasion, when the then Director-

Archangel Michael.
Mosaic from the semi-dome of the apse in the church of the Virgin Kanakaria. 6th century.
Located in 1989 in Indianapolis USA and returned to Nicosia in 1991. Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

General, René Maheu, reminded all parties of their responsibilities under the Hague Convention and sent a two-man mission to the island. In 1975 – by which time Ahmadu Mahtar M'Bow had become Director-General – the Canadian expert Jacques Dalibard made three missions to Cyprus, but his very full report of over 100 pages was never published, probably because of pressure from Turkey and some of its supporters in the secretariat. At the 1976 General Assembly of UNESCO it was decided to make provision in the organization's official work programme for sending a mission to the whole of Cyprus, to study and report back on the situation regarding its cultural heritage. That provision has been repeated in every biennial programme since 1976 and successive Directors-General have attempted to implement it, only to come up against one insuperable obstacle, the obstruction of the Denktash regime.

This has usually taken the form of Mr Denktash's insistence that UNESCO reach a separate formal agreement with his 'administration', and this, of course, UNESCO is debarred from doing by the international community's decision, through the United Nations, not to recognize the break-away regime. The mission could easily be carried out under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General's special representative in Cyprus – as for instance the UNDP programme that operates smoothly in all parts of the island – but Mr Denktash will have none of it.

One other international body that has been active in the question of the cultural heritage of Cyprus is the Committee on Culture and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. In September 1987 Europa Nostra – a federation of non-governmental organizations throughout Europe, interested in the architectural and the natural heritage, with consultative status in the Council of Europe – passed a resolution on the danger to the architectural and artistic heritage in the occupied part of Cyprus, with special reference to the churches. The issue was discussed by the Committee on Culture and Education, and a small mission visited Cyprus in the summer of 1989. Because it was led by a parliamentarian, Senator Van der Werff of the Netherlands, there was no problem in entering occupied Cyprus. After a brief visit a report was written by an expert attached to the mission, Dr Robin Cormack of the Courtauld Institute in London. Only 14 older Orthodox buildings in the occupied area were visited, a tiny sample consisting mostly of buildings that were better known and thus less likely to suffer. Even so, the report gives some idea of the general situation.

In seven of these churches the mosaics or wall-paintings and icons had been destroyed or removed, two showed neglect or damage, one had been turned into a cultural centre (its icons and decorations removed), one was used

Saint George at Farangos. A Middle Byzantine, single-aisled church with dome and later additions.
The interior of the monument has been plundered completely.

The church of Saint Nicholas at Elia in the Kyrenia district. 19th century.
The interior of the monument has been plundered completely.

The church of the Holy Cross at Lymbia. Now used as a barracks.

as a store for icons and another had been converted into a museum (neither of them had retained its original icons), one was still in use as a church and one was closed but well guarded. A modern church was used as an icon store.

The matter was taken further at the Committee's subsequent meetings in 1990 – in which both Cypriot and Turkish members of parliament participated – when a proposal drafted by the Council of Europe's secretariat was discussed; this involved the setting up of an international foundation to inspect and help to preserve and restore religious monuments of both communities in all parts of Cyprus. The governing body would have consisted largely of non-Cypriots, mainly experts, but the two communities would have been represented by persons appointed by the owners of the properties, the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Cyprus for the churches and the EVKAF for the mosques. In this way government representation would have been excluded, avoiding political problems of jurisdiction or control, and an international effort with practical objectives and capabilities might have come into being. Both the Cypriot and Turkish members of parliament, as well as experts from Cyprus, agreed to the plan, but nothing more was heard of it. It had come up against the reality of the situation in the occupied part of the island.

In International Law it is clearly Turkey, the occupying power, that bears full responsibility for all that takes place in the northern part of Cyprus. There has, however, been a great reluctance on the part of international organizations, and most governments that might have taken an interest in the endangered Cypriot cultural heritage, to recognize this and act accordingly. The illegal Denktash regime has thus been tacitly allowed to have the last word.

This indeed is the political reality that has been instrumental in destroying such an important part of the Cypriot heritage. Local and international art thieves, random vandals and religious bigots have undoubtedy played their part, but the framework in which this has happened and has been facilitated is political, constructed and kept in place by the Turkish authorities through the Denktash regime.

Over the last few years the Turkish Cypriots, under the pressure of international public opinion and that of the enlightened section of their own press, have tried to safeguard some of the monuments and even a tiny proportion of the churches – three or four out of many hundreds – in order to attract tourists, if for no other reason. But the harm has been done, the greater part of the ecclesiastical heritage has been destroyed or damaged and the part of Cyprus occupied by Turkish troops has, to a great extent, been cleansed of the main visible strands of its history and culture, just as it has been cleansed of the majority of its indigenous population. The return of the Kanakaria mosaic fragments is only a faint shaft of light in the prevailing gloom.

Constantine Leventis

President of the A.G. Leventis Foundation

The Church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi

Athanasios Papageorgiou PhD
Former Director
of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus

The left forearm of Archangel Gabriel. Detail from the mosaic decoration of the apse of the church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi. Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

Archangel Michael. After the church was looted in 1978, the mosaic was sold abroad. It was located in Indianapolis USA in 1989 and repatriated after the judgment of the American courts in 1991. Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

The church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi, a rare example of 6th-century art.
The apse was decorated with a central representation of the Virgin holding the Christ-Child on her knees, surrounded by medallions of the apostles. It was plundered totally in 1979. Just a few tesserae were found on the church floor by a foreign journalist, who handed them over the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus.

The church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi is of domed basilica type. The blind dome (domical vault) roofs the bema. The apse is the only surviving feature from the fifth-century timber-roofed basilica that was destroyed during the Arab raids on Cyprus in the seventh century. The basilica was rebuilt after the destruction, initially with a timber roof and subsequently with a vaulted one. A domical vault was added later above the holy bema (sanctuary), and in the twelfth century a dome was added to the nave.

Between 525 and 530 the semi-dome of the sanctuary apse was decorated with mosaics depicting the Virgin enthroned within a lambent mandorla and holding the Christ-Child in her lap, flanked by the archangels Michael and Gabriel. The head of the Virgin and of Gabriel had been destroyed long ago. The whole composition is set in a paradisaical landscape with palm trees and broad-leaved plants, that ends in a broad decorative band with meander pattern and acanthus leaves. The band enclosed thirteen medallions with the figures of the twelve apostles and Christ or the Cross. Three of these medallions had been destroyed in the past. Until 1974 the remaining figures of the apostles, Andrew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Mark and Thaddeus were preserved in excellent condition. The medallions with Luke and Bartholomew were also preserved but slightly damaged, while the medallions with the apostles Paul and Philip had suffered serious damage.

The mosaics in the Virgin Kanakaria church were one of just three ensembles of sixth-century apsidal mosaics surviving in Cyprus and one of the few extant examples of mosaics – and of paintings – from the period before the Iconomachy, in the eastern part of the Byzantine Empire. The work of a Cypriot mosaicist who followed the style prevailing in Constantinople, they are somewhat closer to the Hellenistic tradition than the other contemporary mural mosaics, notwithstanding

The church of the Virgin Kanakaria at Lythrangomi.
The Virgin enthroned holding the Christ-Child in her lap is depicted within a radiant mandorla.
The central representation in the apse, before its detachment from the wall by the Turks in 1979.

Part of the representation of the Virgin, located in Indianapolis USA in 1989, after the plundering of the church.
Repatriated in 1991, the mosaic is now in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

The church of the Virgin Kanakaria. Part of the Virgin's left palm, from the representation in the apse.
Found in Munich in 1997, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

the obvious influences received from the art of the East. The iconography of the mosaics in the apse of the Virgin Kanakaria is unique. For the one and only time in Byzantine painting the Virgin is surrounded by a shining mandorla, which is characteristic of divinity; it usually surrounds Christ in the scenes of the Transfiguration and the Ascension, when he revealed his divinity to his disciples. Through this iconographic element the executor or the commissioner of the mosaic sought to emphasize that the Virgin Mary was the Mother of God (Theotokos) as opposed to the Mother of Christ (Christotokos). Unfortunately this unique iconographic element, a tangible expression of the decisions of the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils, has been destroyed for ever by the Turks. Future generations will only know it from photographs.

After the invasion and occupation by the Turkish army in 1974, the village of Lythrangomi continued to be inhabited by Greek Cypriots, until they were expelled in 1976. At that time the treasures still existed in the church. In 1979 the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus was informed that the mosaics from the apse had been violently detached or destroyed. Some tesserae from the decorative zone of the mutilated mosaics were brought to the Department by foreign visitors who had picked them up from the church floor.

The destruction was denounced to UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) as well as to Europa Nostra and all the distinguished professors of Byzantine Art in Europe and the United States of America.

In 1988 four fragments of the mosaics were located in Indianapolis, USA, in the hands of the art-dealer Peg Goldberg:

- The upper part of the chest of Archangel Michael.
- The upper part of the representation of the Virgin and the Christ-Child.
- The medallions with the apostles Matthew and James.

The Church and the government of the Republic of Cyprus began legal proceedings against Ms Goldberg. The court of Indianapolis and the Appeal Court in Chicago both ruled that the four mosaics be returned to their legal owner, the Church of Cyprus. They were repatriated in 1991, when they were received with great emotion by the people

7 156

Detail from the mosaic decoration of the apse Found in Munich in 1997.

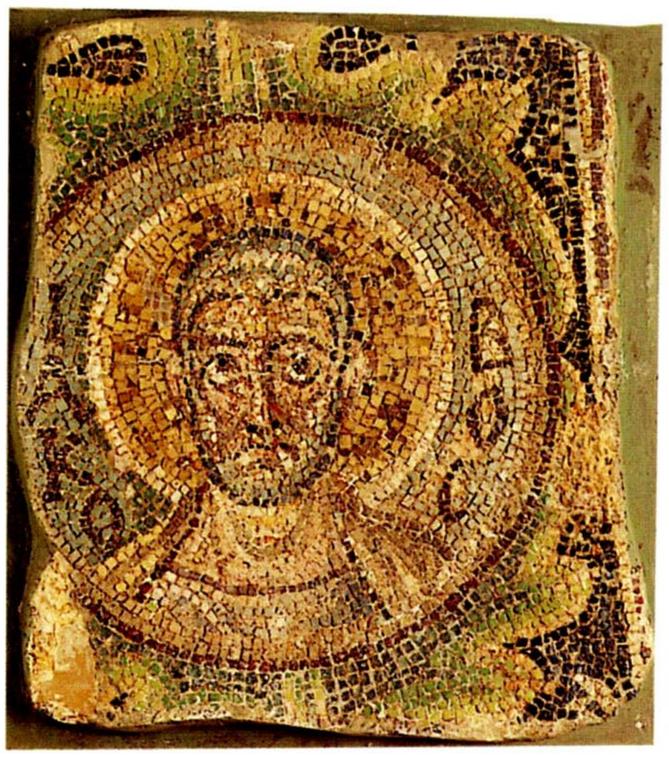
Part of the apse and the dome of the church as seen from the west. Photograph taken before the monument was looted.

Apostle Thaddeus. Found in Munich in October 1997 and repatriated in December the same year.
Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

Evangelist Mark. Sold abroad after the looting of the church, the present whereabouts of the mosaic are unknown.

Evangelist Matthew. Located in 1988 in Indianapolis USA and repatriated in 1991, after the judgment of the American courts. Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

Apostle Andrew. Sold abroad after the looting of the church, the present whereabouts of the mosaic are unknown.



Apostle James. Photograph taken after the return of the mosaic from Indianapolis to Cyprus in 1991.

Apostle Thaddeus. Photograph taken after the return of the mosaic from Munich to Cyprus in 1997.

Evangelist Matthew. Photograph taken after the return of the mosaic from Indianapolis to Cyprus in 1991.

Evangelist Luke. Returned to Cyprus via Germany in 1993. Now exhibited in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

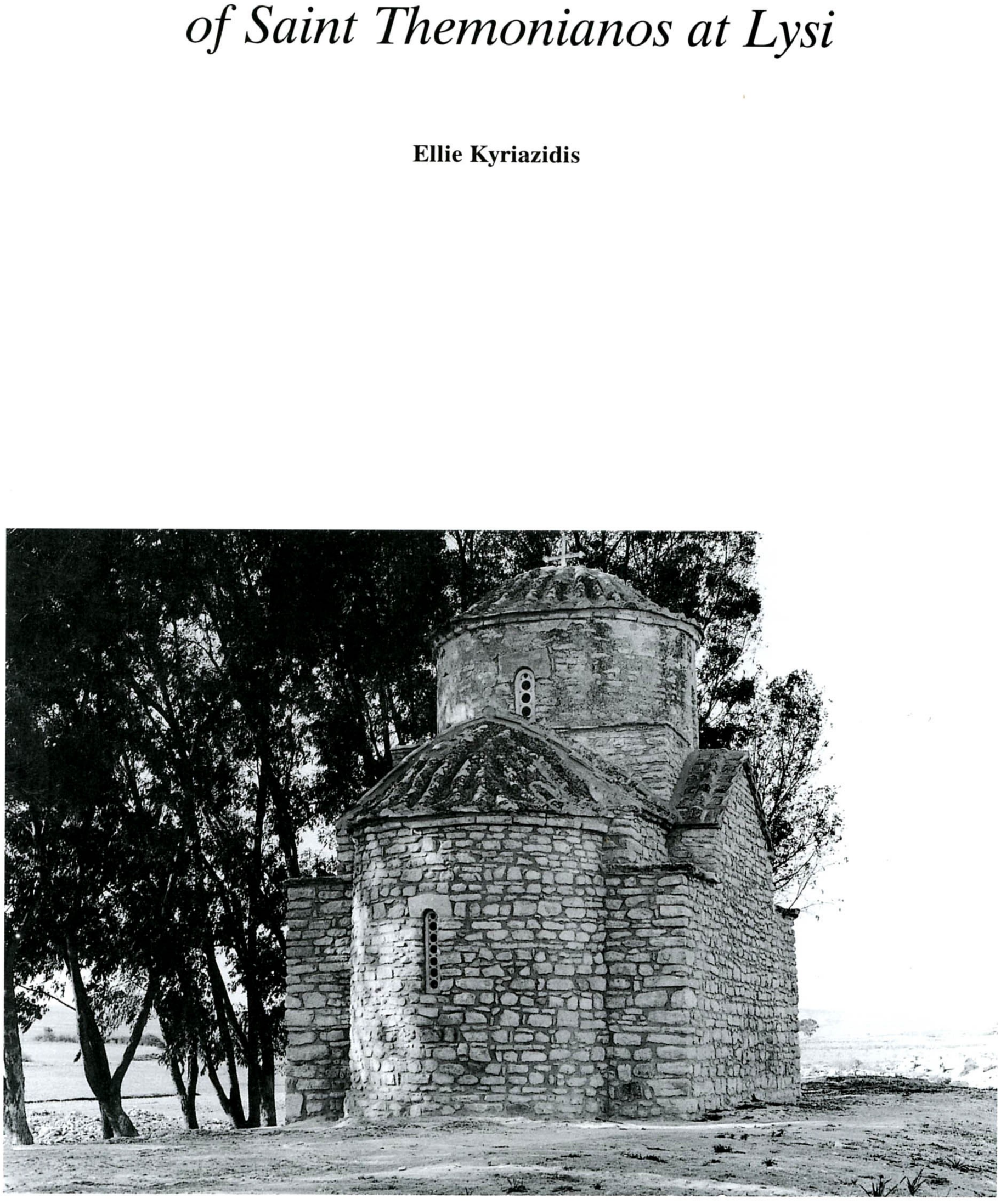
of Cyprus, and are now exhibited in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation in Nicosia. Previously, in 1983, on the intervention of an art-dealer in London, the medallions with the figures of apostles Luke and Bartholemew, which had been badly damaged on their removal from the apse, had been returned to Cyprus via Germany. The medallion with Apostle Thaddeus was acquired in September 1997. In October that year the medallion with Apostle Thomas was discovered in the possesion of the Turkish antiquities thief Aydin Dikmen. The following month, November, the right hand of Archangel Gabriel and the left hand of the Virgin, from which the finger tips are missing, part of the decorative zone and other small pieces of the mosaic were found.

Unfortunately the medallions with the apostle Andrew and the evangelist Mark, those with the badly destroyed figures of Paul and Philip, and the bottom half of the representation of the Theotokos with the Christ-Child have yet to be located.

Apostle James. Sold abroad after the looting of the church and located in Indianapolis USA in 1988. Repatriated in 1991, it is now in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

The Church of Saint Themonianos at Lysi

Ellie Kyriazidis



Saint Themonianos at Lysi. The totally plundered church stands in an area of the occupied territory which is under armed guard.

The chapter on the church of Saint Themonianos at Lysi is based on information in the monograph by Annemarie Weyl Carr and Laurence J. Morocco, ***A Byzantine Masterpiece Recovered, the Thirteenth Century Murals of Lysis, Cyprus.*** **University of Texas Press, Austin 1991.**

Saint Themonianos at Lysi. The Virgin between the archangels Michael and Gabriel.
Wall-painting from the apse of the church, as it is displayed today in Houston, Texas.

The church of Saint Themonianos after the plundering of the wall-paintings.
View of the now bare walls in the monument's interior.

The story begins with two poor-quality, black-and-white photographs shown by the art critic and dealer Yannis Petsopoulos to Bertrand Davezac, representative of the well-known American family of collectors, the De Menil. The photographs were of wall-paintings depicting Christ Pantocrator and the Virgin in Intercession, between Archangels Gabriel and Michael. A Turkish 'collector', resident in Munich, appeared as the owner of the works, declaring that he had acquired them after their legal export.

Madame Dominique De Menil saw the photographs of the wall-paintings for the first time in Paris, in early June 1983. The meeting with the Turkish 'collector' Aydin Dikmen was revealing. We now know with hindsight that he is the dealer who in 1988 had sold the mosaics removed from the Kanakaria church in occupied Cyprus.

Dikmen's apartment in Munich was dark and crammed with the wall-paintings. He related that in the course of building a small hotel at a place called Bim-Bir-Kilisse in southern Anatolia, one of his workmen had found part of a church, quite by chance, as he was digging. His story was clearly riddled with inconsistencies. The Menil Foundation appointed Herbert Brownell, former US Attorney General and Minister of Justice, to handle the affair, his brief being to find out whether these wall-paintings were known and recorded by scientific services in some state. So photographs were sent to the embassies of all countries in which Byzantine civilization had once flourished. The Turkish and Cypriot embassies both replied that the works came from their territory, but only the Cypriot embassy was able to prove it. In its reply the Republic of Cyprus confirmed that the wall-paintings belonged to the church of Saint Themonianos near Lysi, in occupied Cyprus, which had been detached from the control of the Republic of Cyprus with the Turkish invasion of 1974. The criminal despoliation of the church must have occurred between 1974 and 1983.

After repeated discussions between the Menil Foundation, Prof. V. Karageorghis, then Director of the Department of Anti-

Archangel Gabriel
Wall-painting from th
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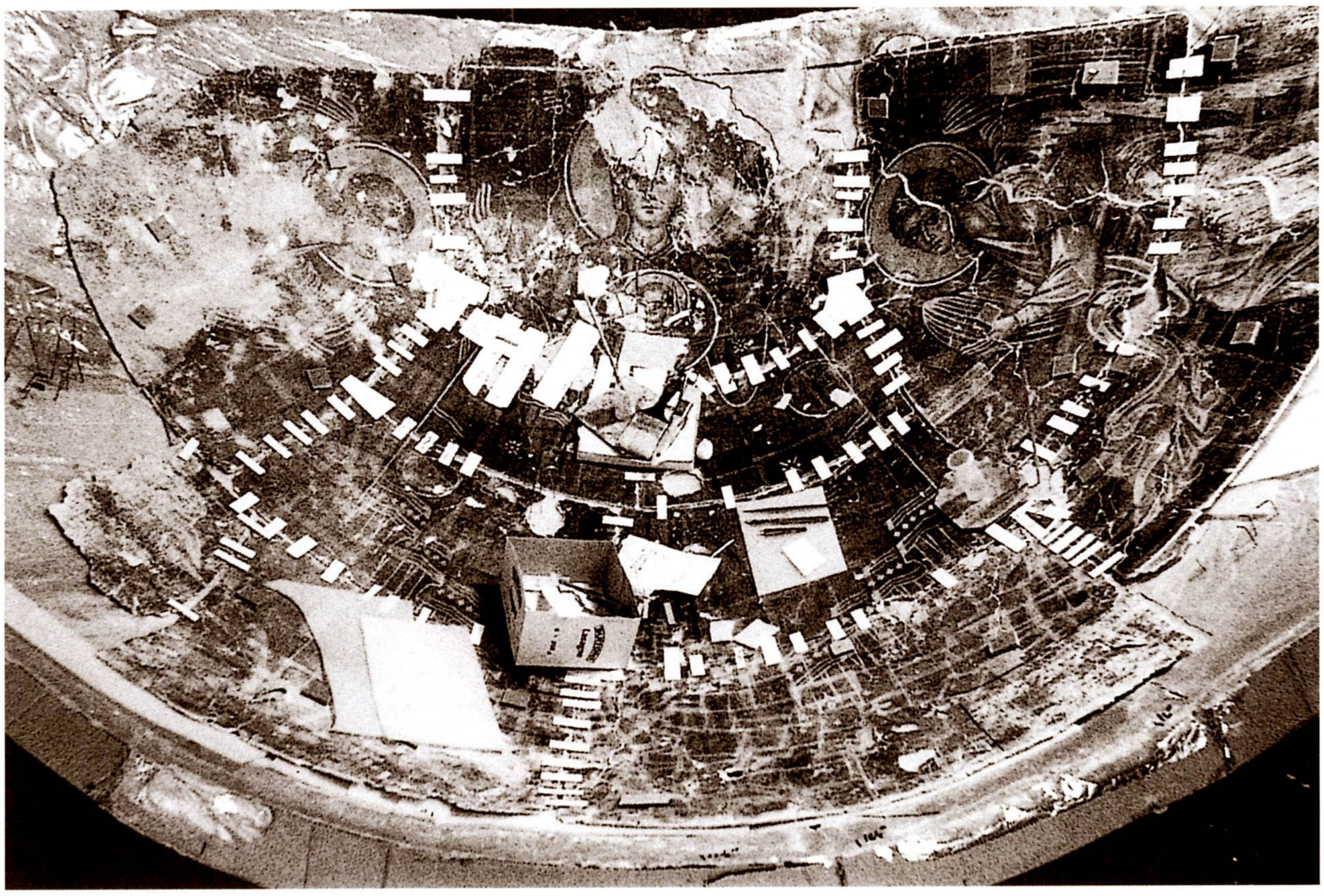
as it is displayed toda
in Houston, Texas



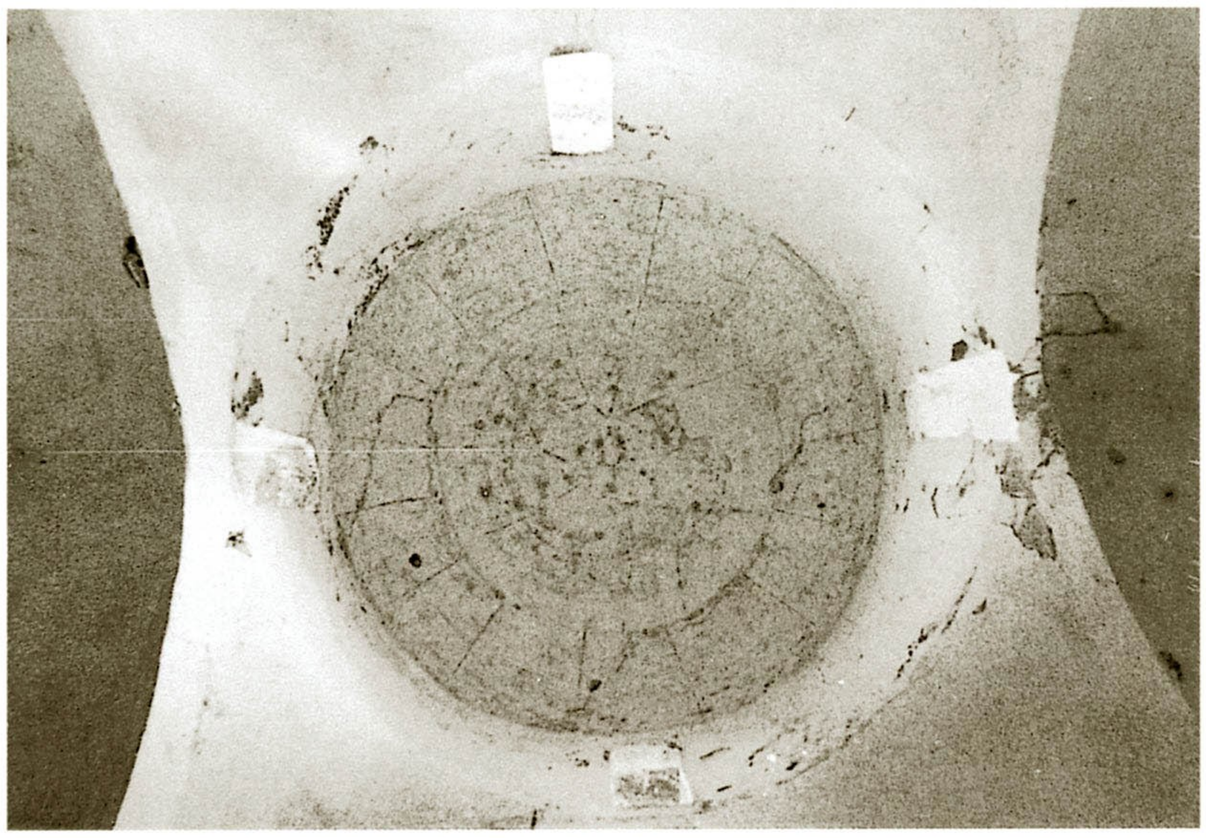
The wall-paintings from the apse during the course of their restoration in L. Morocco's London atelier.

quities for Cyprus, and the Church of Cyprus, it was agreed that the wall-paintings from Saint Themonianos be granted on loan to the Foundation in Houston, Texas, after their full and scientifically correct restoration. The whole process was concluded in January 1985 with the agreement that from 1 January 1986 and for fifteen years hence the Menil Foundation would be responsible for their safekeeping in a suitable place. The restoration of the wall-paintings, carried out in London, in the laboratories of the conservator Laurence Morocco, took over three years and was finished in 1988. After the transfer of the works to the United States they were placed in a chapel specially built for this purpose, of exactly the same dimensions as Saint Themonianos, from where the wall-paintings had been violently removed.

The Menil Foundation invited Dr Annemarie Weyl Carr, a specialist in the study of twelfth- and thirteenth-century icons, to publish the paintings. She presented the results of her research at the 14th annual congress of Byzantine Studies, held in Houston in 1988, observing that even from the photographs she realized she was confronted by a find that was every art historian's dream. The wall-paintings from the village of Lysi are regarded as one of the most important works of Cypriot religious painting, on a par with those in Asinou, Lagoudera, Lythrangomi and Moutoulla. The American scholar arrived at three conclusions: a) Palaeologan painting was not dominant in Cyprus during the thirteenth century, on account of the fact that the island had been captured by Richard the Lionheart in 1191 and was no longer influenced directly by Constantinople. b) Cyprus, along with Syria, the Lebanon and Palestine, created a style known as 'Crusader Art', in which amalgam the Byzantine element is intense and dynamic but which is rather correlated with Late Gothic technique than with the development of Palaeologan painting. All these traits make thirteenth-century Cypriot art particularly interesting and Professor Weyl Carr regards the Lysi wall-paintings as one of the most important works of the period, comparable with those in the church of the Virgin at Trikomo and seminal for redefining the study of Cypriot painting. The last conclusion is c)that the work constitutes a contribution to our conception of the iconography as this evolved through the mutual influence of styles within the wider artistic and historical context of the thirteenth century.

In 1936 Rupert Gunnis expressed his opinion on the quality of the wall-paintings in Saint Themonianos, which is the first reference to them in the historiography of Byzantine art. The works were published again in the Annual Report of the Director of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, in 1972. They had been partially cleaned and a preliminary study prepared, but all these works ceased after the Turkish invasion of the

The Pantocrator, the Deesis, the Preparation of the Throne (Last Judgement) and angels. The restored wall-paintings of the dome, as they are displayed in Houston, Texas.



Saint Themonianos. The now bare dome of the church after the Turks' removal of all the wall-paintings.

island in 1974; the village and its church found themselves in the military zone of occupied Cyprus and their names were changed repeatedly by the Turks, as is the case with most toponyms.

The church of Saint Themonianos is of the known Byzantine type of single-aisled with dome, which is frequently encountered in Cyprus, particularly in the eastern region of Famagusta, in Larnaca and Limassol. Numerous variations of this type were built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The smallness of the church is striking, but is most probably due to its being a private chapel. As the inscription at the base of the apse reveals, it was dedicated by the hieromonk and abbot (*hegumen*) of the Saint Andronikos Laurentios Monastery to the local saint Themonianos. It is moreover a fact that small churches are usual in Byzantine architecture and, in contrast to Western Christendom, are found throughout the Byzantine world. An important example of this conception is the chapel of the metropolis of Athens, dedicated to Saint Eleutherios, an architectural jewel which as a place of worship permits direct commune between the praying Christian and the divine presence.

The iconography in the church of Saint Themonianos follows the form of the dome, with a highly successful marriage of architectural and artistic elements. The image flows, imitating gold-embellished objects or textiles with the use of gold striations, and the warm, vibrant, varied colours alternate with white in wonderful combinations.

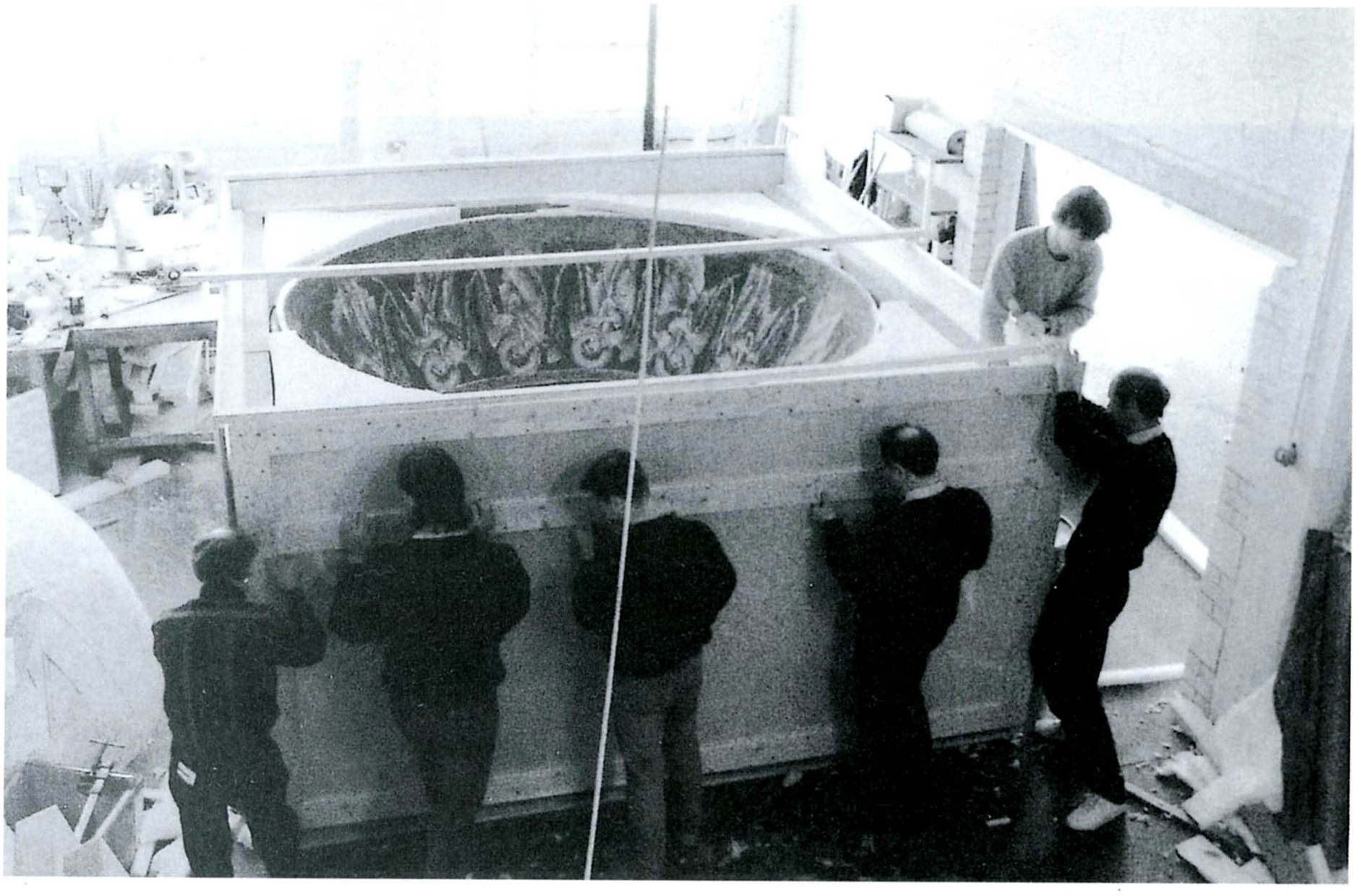
The relative political stability of Cyprus,

The Deesis and the angels from the decoration of the dome, in the course of restoration.

Angels (detail). Wall-painting in the dome, as it is displayed today in Houston, Texas.

The wall-paintngs from the dome, in the course of restoration.

Angels (detail). Wall-painting in the dome, as it is displayed today in Houston, Texas.



Restoration of the wall-paintings from the dome was completed in Morocco's atelier in London.
The photograph shows the dome packed in boxes for transportation to Houston, Texas.

Final phase of the restoration of the wall-paintings of the dome.

Sections of the wall-paintings from the church of Saint Themonianos, before work began on their restoration.

secured by the Frankish hegemony, was conducive to the creation of important works of art. The Latin population was mainly of aristocrats, to a large extent urban, with very few poor people, and the countryside was consequently in the hands of the indigenous Greek population. So Frankish churches were built in the urban centres, while Byzantine continuity was maintained in the rural areas. The influence of Constantinopolitan art was no longer strong, but the Byzantine idiom remained unchanged. It was not Palaeologan nor did it repeat earlier types. The Greek Professor Doula Mouriki, in her studies on thirteenth-century iconography, noted a significant number of large panel icons designated as Cypriot. These are of large format and come from churches in areas with a large population. Dr Mouriki identified in the icons and wall-paintings the technique of the *maniera Cypria*, and considered that they were votive offerings of prosperous donors, capable of patronizing churches and of commissioning icons and wall-paintings. She also noted as characteristic of the iconography an affinity with both Syrian and Western elements, comparable with the Crusader icons in the Sinai Monastery, creations of artists from Asia Minor who worked for Christians of diverse nationalities – those who had been expelled by the invasions of the Seljuk Turks, Mamelukes or Crusaders. Their technique is remarkably akin to that of the paintings in the church of Saint Themonianos.

Only after Laurence J. Morocco and his collaborators had completed the painstaking task of restoring the wall-paintings, did he dare to visit occupied Cyprus and see the church for himself. He vividly describes the desertion of the region and his worries about the difficulties he might encounter. He mainly wanted to confirm that his estimates were correct and that the work he had done would not be overturned by comparison with the structural features of the church, in their present state. He was actually inside the monument, with all his equipment and cameras, greatly moved by the emotional experience, when a band of armed Turks rushed in and cornered him. He managed to convince them that he was just a lone tourist. Mr Morocco hastened to Kyrenia and returned via Istanbul to London.

The Church of Christ Antiphonetes in the Village of Kalograia, Kyrenia

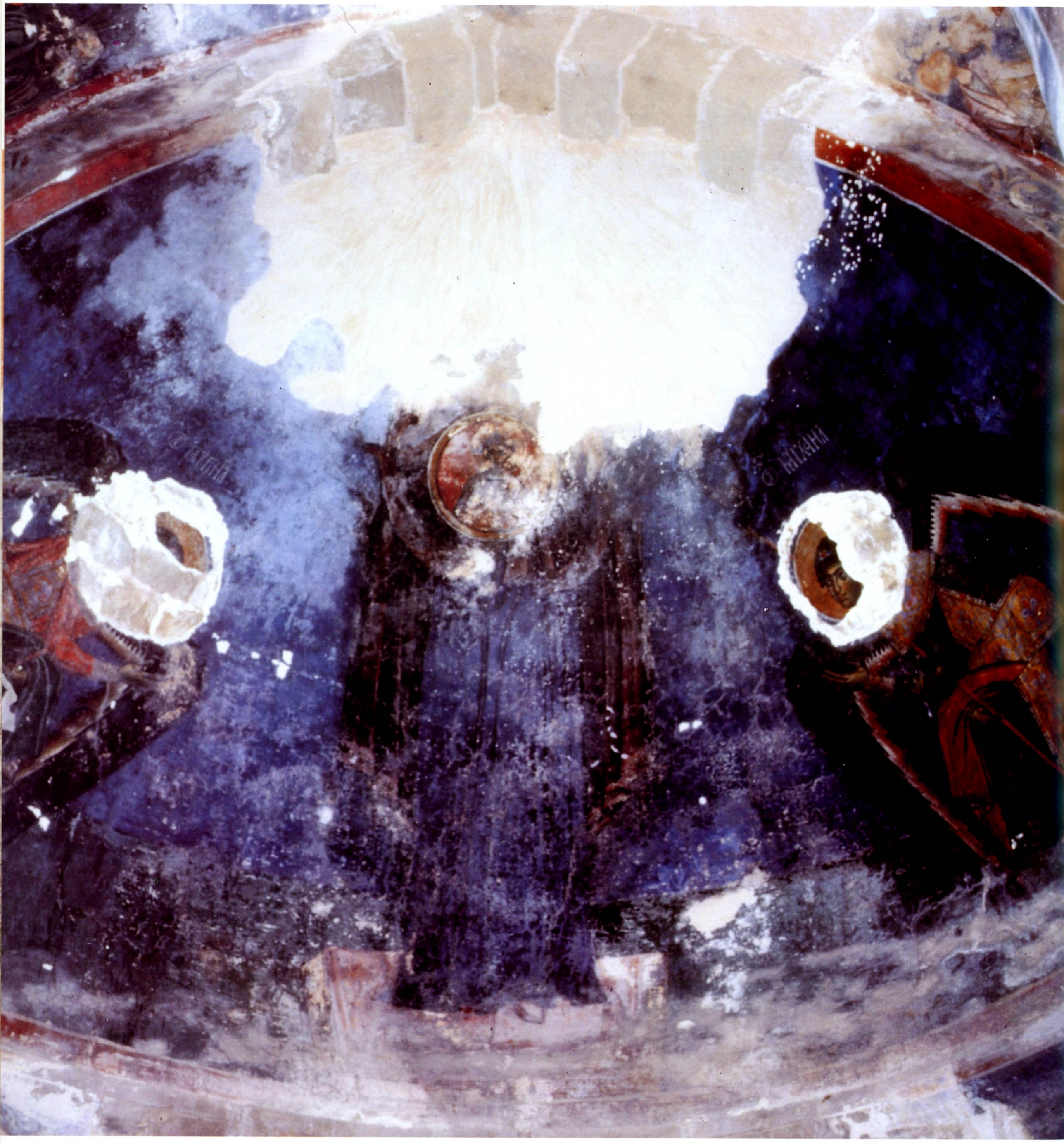
Athanasios Papageorgiou PhD
Former Director
of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus

The church of Christ Antiphonetes in the occupied village of Kalograia.
Built in the late 12th century and decorated with wall-paintings dating
from the late 12th to the late 15th century. The church was pillaged and parts of its
interior were totally destroyed.

Archangel Gabriel in the sanctuary apse, before the Turkish invasion.

Archangel Michael in the sanctuary apse, before the Turkish invasion.

The sanctuary apse. Archangels Gabriel and Michael after the plundering of the church and their destruction by the Turks.
The antiquities thieves did not manage to remove the whole heads from the wall.



The interior of the church of Christ Antiphonetes, after the pillaging in 1979.
On the west wall are a few remnants of the 15th-century wall-paintings.

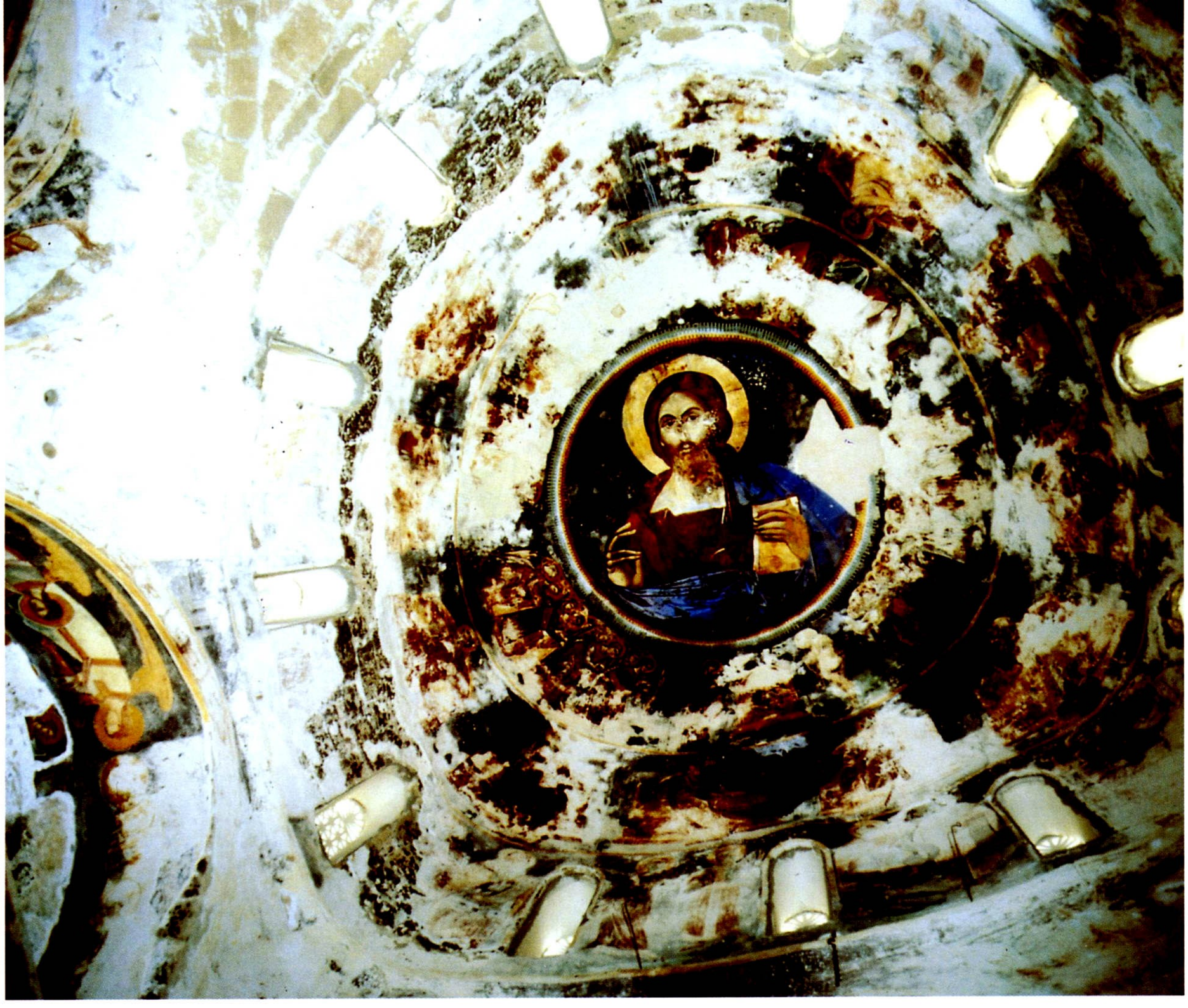
The church of Christ Antiphonetes, built in the late twelfth century as the katholikon of a monastery, stands in the idyllic woodland of the Pentadaktylos, with a superb view over the northern coast and the sea. In its gardens grows one of the two amber trees in Cyprus, whose aromatic bark is used for making incense. The church, the sole example of the insular domed octagon type in Cyprus, was in excellent condition until 1974.

The narthex was added to the west of the nave in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century and an open portico was built on the south side of the church in the early sixteenth century. The narthex and the portico were perhaps erected at the expenses of the paternal grandmother of the historian Estienne de Lusignan, for which reason he is considered to be the donor (*ktetor*) of the Antiphonetes Monastery. As he himself recounts, one of his brothers converted to the Orthodox faith and became a monk in this foundation.

The church was adorned with wall-paintings in the late twelfth century and redecorated extensively in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. The original wall-paintings survived in the apse, the bema vaults and the east free-standing columns of the nave, the west column of the south wall and the southwest squinch. The Virgin was depicted in the apse, full-bodied and in the type of the Vlachernitissa, flanked by the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Lower down were celebrant hierarchs. The Ascension of Christ was represented in the vaults above the bema and Cypriot hierarchs above the parabemata, while on the east side of the east column of the north wall and of the two free-standing columns were Saints Nicholas, Simon the Stylite, Demetrianos, Daniel the Stylite, Triphyllios and Simon the Miracle-worker. On the intrados of the arches linking the two east columns to the north and south walls were busts of Saints Photios, Polychronios, Endoxos and an unidentified saint. On the blind arches formed in the position of the east squinches were the Nativity of Christ and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Above the west face of the two east columns and between the aforementioned scenes were

Wall-painting of the Nativity. Late 12th century.
Photograph taken before the church was destroyed by the Turks.

Three of the twelve apostles on the engaged column. Parts of the representation were removed during the looting of the church. Photograph taken before the Turkish invasion.



Wall-painting in the dome of the church. The representation of the Pantocrator was not destroyed because it is so high up. Nevertheless bullet holes from the rifles of Turkish soldiers are visible above Christ's head.

standing figures of the archangels Michael and Gabriel. Apostle Paul and Saint Endoxos were depicted lower down on the same column. The Transfiguration of Christ occupied the southwest squinch.

The wall-paintings are consistent with the general current of Late Comnenian painting in Cyprus in the closing years of the twelfth century. The figures are less slender, with strong contrasts between the shaded periphery and the illumined planes of the face. Perhaps more schematic than the wall-paintings prior to the Frankish conquest, they are like those characterized by a pronounced disposition for rendering an amalgam of divine and human beauty.

The remaining parts of the church were repainted in the late fifteenth or the early sixteenth century. At the centre of the dome was the Pantocrator and around him the Deesis and a host of angels. Lower down were the apostles seated on thrones and between the windows of the dome the sixteen prophets. On the north wall was the monumental scene of the Last Judgement-Second Coming, which covered both the columns-responds of the south wall. A characteristic iconographic innovation is the replacement of Adam and Eve, either side of the Preparation of the Throne (Hetoimasia), by the Innocents of Bethlehem massacred by Herod. Opposite, on the south wall, between the two columns-responds, was the many-figured composition of the Root of Jesse. In the northwest squinch and around it were scenes from the life of the Virgin. Lower down, on the north and south walls, were standing saints.

These wall-paintings are among the most typical examples of the Cypriot School of Postbyzantine painting, which developed in parallel with the better known Cretan School. A major difference between the two schools is the cultivation of monumental painting in Cyprus from the late fifteenth century until 1570, when the island fell to the Turks.

The sixteenth-century carved wooden iconostasis in the church was crowned by the Crucifix with the rood figures (*lypera*) and adorned with sixteenth-century despotic icons (Christ, the Virgin, Saint John the Theologian, the Deesis) and three icons from the Dodecaorton, a bema door of the sixteenth century and another of the seventeenth, as wall as a seventeenth-century icon of Archangel Michael. Another icon of Archangel Michael, of the sixteenth century or earlier, was incorporated in the south wall.

The Turks had already destroyed the iconostasis in 1975. In the years since they

The Virgin enthroned with the Christ-Child. Late 15th century. Despotic icon from the iconostasis of the church.
Removed along with its pair icon of Christ enthroned, it was sold in London and subsequently located in Athens.
It was returned to the Church of Cyprus, on the decision of the Hellenic Minister of Culture,
Mr Evangelos Venizelos, on 14 September 1998.

Part of the iconostasis before the plundering and destruction. The icons were sold abroad. Four were located three years ago in Holland and the case is pending in the Rotterdam court.

applied themselves to the systematic destruction and removal of the wall-paintings, with the compliance if not the connivance of the occupation regime and the Turkish army. The Turks destroyed the heads of the two archangels in the apse, detached the upper part of the Nativity of Christ (12th century) and shot the Pantocrator in the dome with a hunting rifle. The large compositions of the Last Judgement and the Root of Jesse were cut into pieces and removed, with considerable losses in the process. Over sixty fragments were located in Munich. Thirty-three pieces were acquired recently and repatriated in December 1997. The rest were found by the Munich Police on properties of the Turkish antiquities thief Aydin Dikmen in October and November 1997.

The Crucifix, the rood figures, all the icons and the bema doors were stolen and exported to Europe. The large icon of the Virgin enthroned from the iconostasis was identified in Greece and returned to Cyprus in September 1998. Four other icons from the Deesis (Peter, Paul, John and Mark) were located in Holland and the Church of Cyprus is involved in legal proceedings to regain them. The trial is pending in the Rotterdam court.

Wall-painting of the Last Judgement, before the looting. Illustrated on pp. 192-199 are the parts that were removed in he plundering of the church by the Turks and found in Munich, in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. On pp. 192-197 are the parts that were found in Munich in September 1997 and repatriated in December the same year. The parts on pp. 198-19 were located in Munich in 1997 and are still in the custody of the Munich Police.

The wall-painting of the Last Judgement, after the looting of the Antiphonetes.
The now denuded walls in the northern part of the church.

The Last Judgement

The wall-painting from the Antiphonetes church

According to the Gospels and The Revelation of Saint John the Divine, at the Last Judgement Christ will return to earth not as Saviour and Redeemer but to judge all men, living and dead. He will sit upon a throne in the midst of choirs of angels and separate the righteous from the unrighteous, casting the latter into Hell and the eternal fire.

In the wall-painting of the Last Judgement Christ is depicted enthroned and surrounded by an effulgent mandorla. On either side are the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist, standing and turned towards him with their hands outstretched in supplication, which gesture is repeated by the accompanying angels. Further down, on Christ's right, are the martyrs who sacrificed their life for the Lord: clerics, monks and laymen. In the middle of the wall-painting is the Preparation of the Throne or the Hetoimasia, with the throne, the gospel and the symbols of the Passion, here flanked not by the usual kneeling figures of Adam and Eve, but by the Innocents of Bethlehem who were massacred by Herod.

The wall-painting of the Last Judgement extends over both the engaged columns of the north wall. Depicted on the columns are the apostles on thrones, and lower down are the punishments of sinners, in accordance with popular beliefs. A river of fire, beginning from Christ's radiant mandorla, descends to the bottom right corner of the representation, encircling Satan, a monster in human guise, sitting cross-legged and devouring the damned. At the bottom of the painting, which is dated *circa* 1500, is Paradise.

A.P.

The choir of the Just (details). Repatriated in 1997.

The choir of the Just (details). Repatriated in 1997.

The Innocents (the infants of Bethlehem massacred by Herod).
Detail from the representation of the Preparation of the Throne. Repatriated in 1997.

ПАЛ БЕЦ ФН

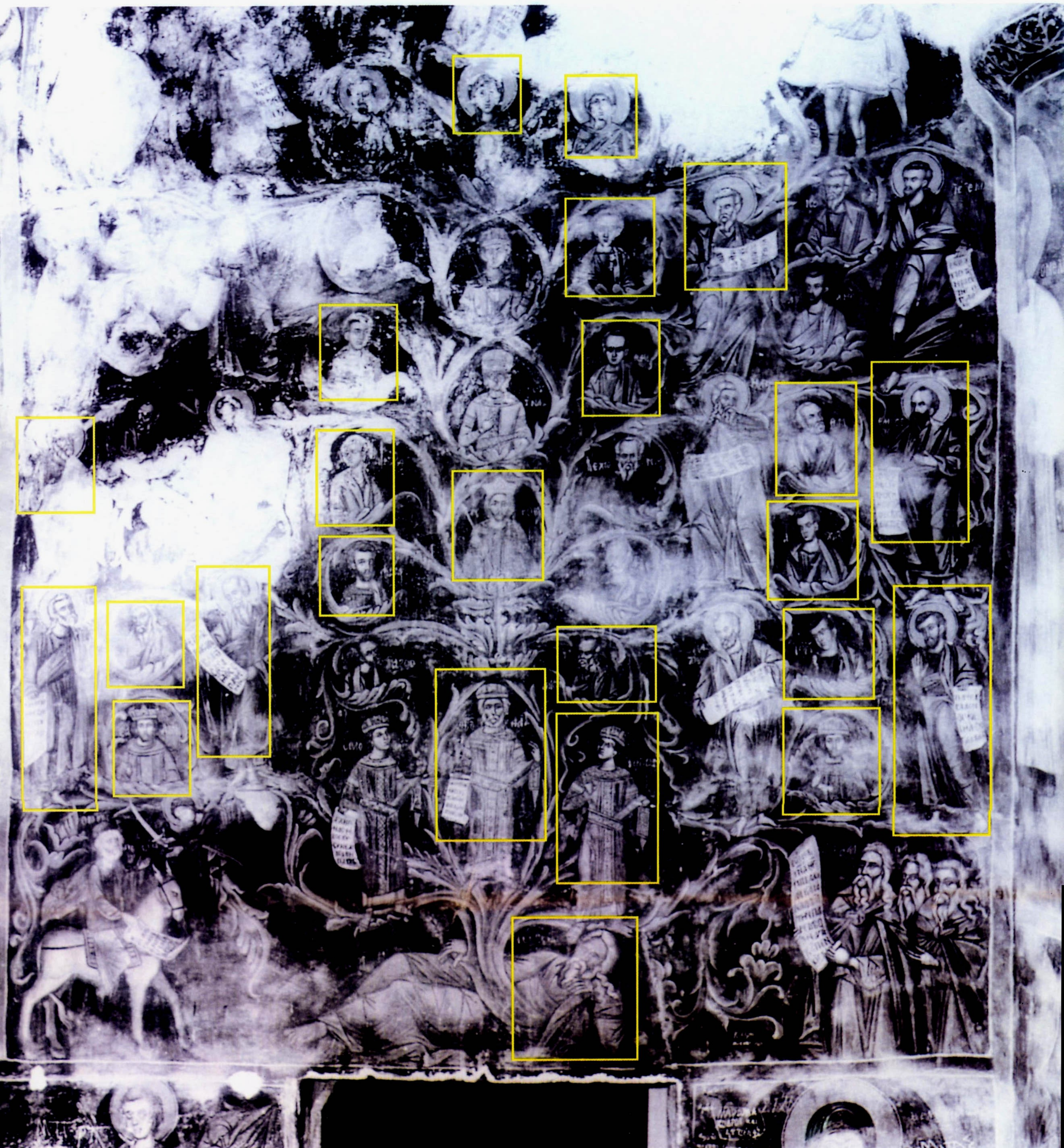
David and Solomon. Detail from the choir of the Just. Repatriated in 1997.

Detail from the choir of the Just. Found in the possession of Aydin Dikmen.
At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

Hosios from the choir of the Just (detail). Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

The Virgin in Paradise. Found in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

Details from the choir of the Just. Repatriated in 1997.



The wall-painting of the Root of Jesse in the church of Christ Antiphonetes at Kalograia. The outlined sections are those which were removed from the wall by antiquities thieves and are illustrated on pp. 210-213. Found in Munich in October 1997 they were repatriated in December the same year. The numbers on the pieces correspond to the entries in the Munich Police records. The wall-paintings are now in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation.

Jesse, genarch of the Virgin's family tree.

The Root of Jesse

The wall-painting in the Antiphonetes church

The Root of Jesse is the iconographic representation of the genealogy of the Virgin Mary. According to the Scriptures, Christ (the Messiah) was a descendant of the royal house of David, son of Jesse.

Jesse appears as a recumbent elderly figure in the lower part of the wall-painting. From his body sprouts a tree, the branches of which form half or whole spirals encircling the figures of Jesse's descendants, from the kings David and Solomon, as well as other kings, prophets, ordinary people and even sinners. At the top of the tree is the Virgin Mary with the infant Christ seated before her chest.

The names of the ancestors of Christ as a man are mentioned in the first chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, but Byzantine and Postbyzantine painters depicted various persons mentioned in the Old Testament.

A. P.

3

loses.

The Virgin (detail).

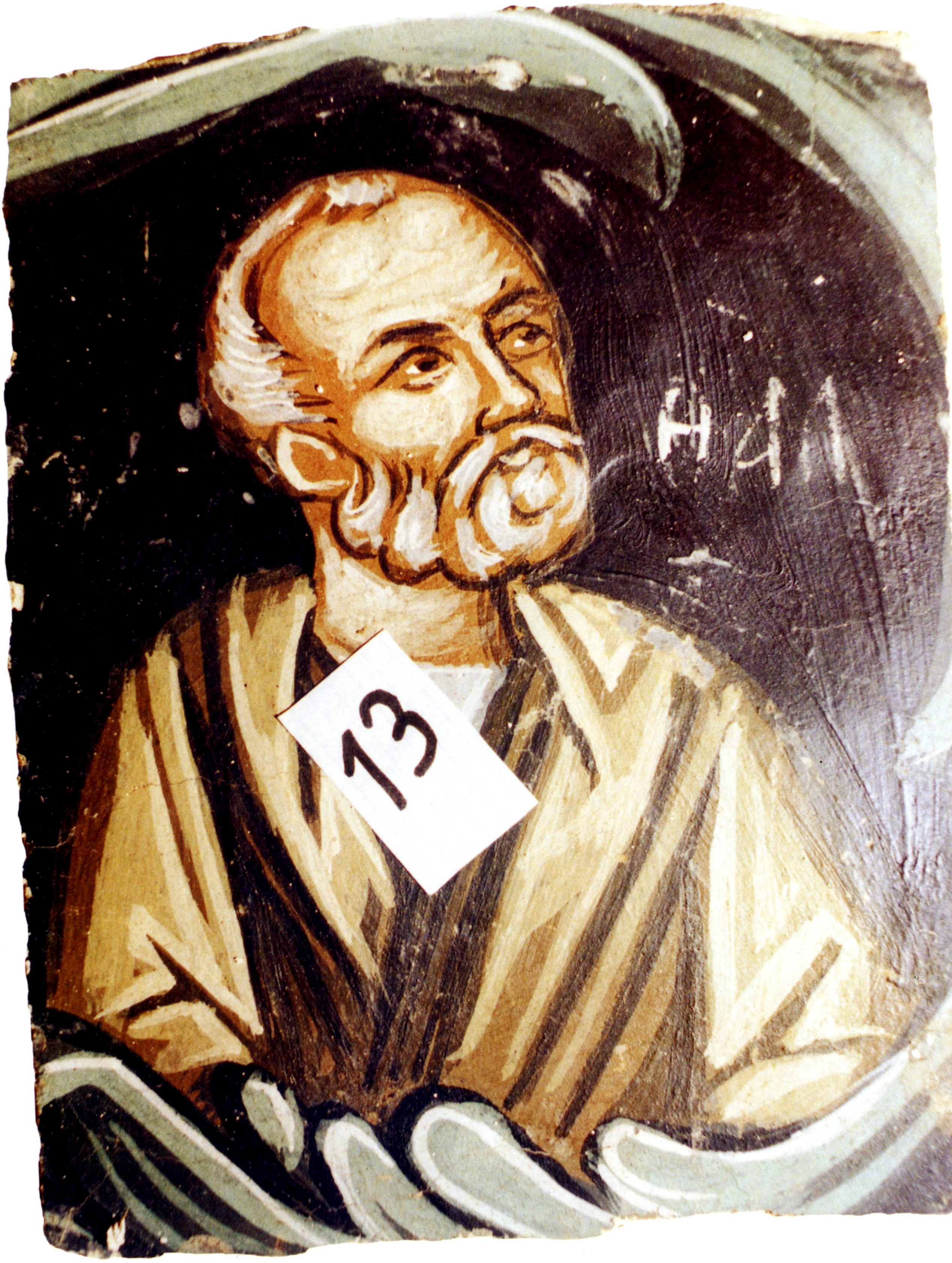
Prophet Gideon.

Salathel.

King Ahaz.

Unidentified figure.

Prophet Nathan.



King Hezekiah.

King David.

Ahiah.

Unidentified figure.

King Manasseh.

12

Absalom, David's son.

Prophet Elisha. .

King Zimri

King Rehoboam.

Aaron, Moses's brother.

Unidentified figure.

Unidentified figure.

Unidentified figure.

Unidentified figure.

The Repatriation of Cypriot Antiquities (1974-1997)

Vassos Karageorghis
Academician

Two picrolite cruciform, anthropomorhic figurines.
Chalcolithic period (2500 BC). C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.

Two pricrolite anthropomorphic amulets.
Chalcolithic period (2500 BC). C. Hadjriprodromou Collection.

The fortunes of the cultural heritage of Cyprus have always been closely interwoven with the trials and tribulations of the Cypriot people, particularly over the past 120 years of the island's history. When European visitors reached Cyprus around 1860, the majority *en route* for the Holy Land or sometimes also as travellers, they were impressed by the archaeological wealth of this place, which they usually knew from references in the Homeric epics, epistles of the apostles or romantic allusions in European literature to the isle of Aphrodite.

From the late nineteenth century until 1935, when the colonial government in Cyprus passed the Law on Antiquities to protect the island's cultural heritage, many museums, mainly in Europe, enriched their collections with Cypriot antiquities. Antiquarianism had been transformed into trade, and Cyprus, initially under the Turkish yoke and susequently under the British, was an easy target for grave-robbers and clandestine diggers.

After the founding of the Republic of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot mutiny during the 1960s and the creation of enclaves in various parts of the island, beyond the control of the state authorities, encouraged the upsurge in the illicit excavation and export of Cypriot antiquities. Important examples of ancient Cypriot art were smuggled abroad and in only a few cases was the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus able to gather information on their fate.

Characteristic is the case of the twelfth-century BC bronze stand (*hypothema*), in a rare style, which had been exported illegally before the Turkish invasion of 1974. It was offered for sale to the British Museum and the Louvre, and when these two museums refused to buy it found its way into the hands of a German antique-dealer in Frankfurt. The Department of Antiquities finally tracked down the precious object and purchased it from the German in 1974, for 9000 Cypriot pounds. A large part of the sum was provided by the late Anastasios G. Leventis, shortly before his death.

Another very important prehistoric work of art from Cyprus, which was sold by Turkish Cypriot grave-robbers in the Palaepaphos region to an antique dealer (and unfortunately an archaeologist too) in Switzerland for an astronomical amount, was located eventually in a museum in America.

However, no act of pilfering the island's cultural heritage can compare with the brutal and wanton pillaging it suffered after the Turkish invasion of 1974.

Alas, no international convention or legislation binds the countries of Europe and America, preventing them from buying works of art of dubious provenance. Quite the

Clay horseman figurine of base-ring type.
Late Bronze Age (1650-1050 BC).

opposite; some countries, such as Switzerland, facilitate the legalization of such works that reach their antique shops illegally, after a certain length of time has elapsed. So it is left to the sensitivity of museum directors to respect the foreign cultural heritage and to refuse to acquire it. Fortunately there are several such cases. In recent years the awareness of American legislation has also been heightened, though principally with regard to the cultural heritage of Latin America. Each time UNESCO proposes that its member states sign an international convention on respect for the foreign cultural heritage and banning the illegal import of works of art to the countries of Europe, where the most important market is located, these countries refuse to sign it. So the 'respectable' antique shops of London, Paris, Zurich, Basle and other European cities continue to advertise 'legally' the cultural heritage of other countries in auction catalogues.

With the Turkish invasion of 1974 and the continuing occupation of a significant and archaeologically rich part of Cyprus, the situation has worsened. Looting of antiquities, at least during the early years of the Turkish occupation, was not only carried out unhindered by grave-robbers and antiquities thieves, but also with the compliance if not the complicity of the occupation forces. Otherwise how can we explain the fact that the Byzantine wall-paintings of entire churches (Antiphonetes, Saint Themonianos) and the mural mosaics from the church of the Virgin Kanakaria were removed systematically from the monuments – a task that demands specialist technicians and plenty of time – and exported from the island? It is sad indeed that at the end of the twentieth century, at a time when states and international organizations are striving for the protection of human rights, they stand by helpless and powerless to confront the immense problem of the plundering of the cultural heritage, which they hypocritically boast belongs to mankind as a whole and is the reponsibility of us all to protect.

In the face of this morally unacceptable situation, the government, the Church and the citizens of Cyprus have managed to salvage whatever was possible of the island's stolen cultural heritage. With anguish and assiduity the Directorate of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus follows the movements of pilfered archaeological treasures in the international market. It not

Krater, White Painted I style.
Cypro-Geometric I period (11th century BC).

Large ewer, Red Polished ware.
Bronze Age (1650 BC).

Wheeled bronze stand (*hypothema*).
Late Bronze Age (12th century BC).
Purchased in Frankfurt in 1974.

only locates them but also endeavours to repatriate them, and has many successes to its credit in this sector.

The repatriation of Cypriot antiquities was secured on the basis of common law in those cases where the legal state of the Republic of Cyprus was able to prove with photographs and other evidence that the pieces located in the markets abroad had a legal owner and had been stolen from museums or legal private collections. There have been several such cases.

Well known is the beneficent contribution of the President of the A.G. Leventis Foundation, Constantine Leventis, to locating and repatriating the mosaics from the Kanakaria church (see pp. 146ff.). Since 1974 many Cypriot antiquities stolen from legal collections, such as the Hadjiprodromou Collection in Famagusta, and discovered in the hands of antique-dealers and 'middlemen' abroad, with no possibility of repatriation by right, have been bought by the A.G. Leventis Foundation and donated to the Cyprus Museum. Numerous other antiquities that appeared in the catalogues of antique dealers in London and other European cities, but for which there was no evidence of theft from a legal owner (e.g. objects from illicit digging at well-known archaeological sites in the occupied territory), have been bought by the said Foundation and brought back to Cyprus.

The Church of Cyprus, the Directorate of the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus, foundations and individuals discharge their duty to their homeland, with faith that the preservation and promotion of its cultural heritage is of capital importance for the preservation of our national identity and for the self-awareness of the Cypriot people.

Oenochoe, White Painted ware. Cypro-Geometric III period (850-750 BC).

Clay dog figurine. Cypro-Archaic II period.
C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.

Terracotta figurine of a flute-player.
Cypro-Geometric III period (early 8th century BC).
C. Hadjiprodromou Collection).

Female figurine with uplifted arms.
Cypro-Archaic period (late 7th century BC).

Terracotta figurine of a centaur with helmet and shield.
Bichrome style, Cypro-Archaic period (750-600 BC).

Limestone head of a temple boy.
Late 5th-4th century BC.
C. Hadjiprodromou Collection.

Limestone relief plaque. Early Hellenistic period (325-150 BC). On one side is a mask of Dionysos with beard, wreath in the hair and ribbons framing the face. On the other side, a group of a nude bearded man in boots upholding the legs of a female figure reclining on a couch.

Cyprus

The long return home

Tasoula L. Georgiou-Hadjitofi
Honorary Consul of Cyprus in the Hague
Representative of the Autocephalous Church of Cyprus for Cultural Affairs

The mosaics and wall-paintings from churches and monasteries in occupied Cyprus were packed in suitcases and chests in Aydin Dikmen's house. This is how they were transported from Munich to the Hague.
The photograph shows part of the wall-painting of the Root of Jesse from the church of Christ Antiphonetes.

Pieces of the wall-painting of the Root of Jesse placed on frames.

Part of the wall-painting of the Last Judgement, from the church of Christ Antiphonetes.

In early October 1997 the Autocephalous Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus, in close co-operation with the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Cyprus, the Cyprus police, Interpol and the German police, recovered several icons, wall-paintings and mosaics that once adorned Orthodox churches in what is now the occupied part of the island. These pieces had been removed illegally following the Turkish occupation of the northern area of Cyprus in 1974. As the representative of the Church of Cyprus responsible for the retrieval of Cypriot cultural property, I am now able to disclose some details on how this discovery was made and to provide aspects of the wider story, which spans the last 24 years, with the wilful pillaging of our country's cultural heritage.

Although this particular event is in itself a major *coup*, it is by no means the end. Many more objects are still in the wrong hands and we will continue to pursue their whereabouts until their return.

The beginning of injustice: the cultural destruction of the occupied area of Cyprus

Since the invasion and occupation by the Turkish army, in 1974, of what is now termed the occupied area of Cyprus, many, if not all, the artefacts in the 500 or so churches, the monasteries, castles and museums there have found their way illicitly to various parts of the world. We can only speculate as to the magnitude of the destruction (since access to a detailed inventory is not permitted), but realistic estimates are:

- 15,000 to 20,000 icons have been removed,
- several dozen major ensembles of wall-paintings and mosaics, dating from the sixth to the fifteenth century, have been removed and divided up for sale abroad, while some have been destroyed completely,
- several thousand antiquities and objects of historical and cultural interest – ranging from chalices, crosses, woodcarvings, bibles etc. – have disappeared.

Apart from the individuals involved in the removal of these works, art dealers in several countries provided a vehicle for the trade in Cypriot antiquities and religious artefacts, for which they have received large sums of money from wealthy buyers over the past 24 years.

The beginning of justice: the return of the Kanakaria mosaics

Reports by independent eye-witnesses and tourists to the occupied area provided confirmation of what was happening to the cultural heritage of Cyprus. The government of Cyprus alerted all major world bodies

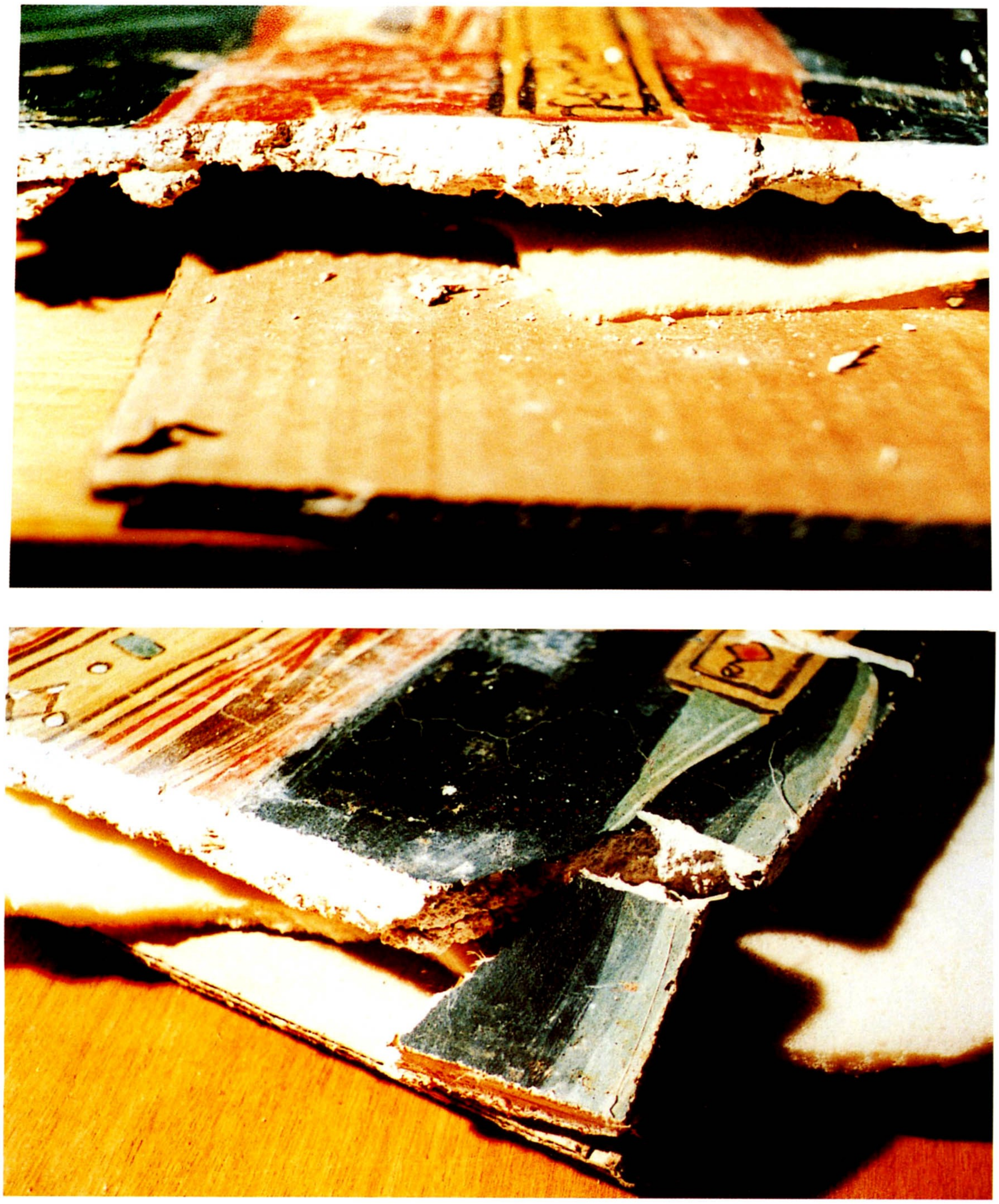
The wall-paintings from the church of Christ Antiphonetes as they were brought to the Hague.
The suitcases were opened by Dutch art conservators (October 1997).

involved with the protection of cultural heritage (including UNESCO) as well as a number of academic institutions and scholars. However, direct action was limited; without knowledge of the individuals concerned and the location of the pieces, what else could be done?

The first major breakthrough came with the confiscation in the United States of America of four mosaics originating from the Kanakaria church, dated to 525-530. The mosaics were on offer for sale by an art dealer named Peg Goldberg. A civil case was brought in the United States by the government and the Church of Cyprus, which ended in a landmark victory. The mosaics were returned in 1991 and are now exhibited in the Byzantine Museum, Nicosia.

Let me digress for a little, to give you some idea of what we mean by pillage. Imagine a small church surrounded by olive trees. You walk inside, and look up at the dome, decorated with representations executed in myriads of tiny stones (tesserae – each less than half a millimetre square), in every imaginable colour. These tiny tesserae compose the mosaics of the Virgin with Christ in the midst of the twelve apostles. How could anyone damage this wonderful ensemble that adorned the church at Lythrangomi for centuries?

Imagine the walls of the Aniphonetes church being painted by hand in the twelfth century, every brushstroke telling a story. Look at these poor wall-paintings today; they tell their own story. How could anyone detach



Parts of the wall-paintings from the church of Christ Antiphonetes
during their exhibition in the Town Hall of the Hague (November 1997).

7149

The head of Saint Ignatios of Antioch from the wall-painting from the church of the Virgin Apsinthiotissa. 14th century. Found in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

The back of a piece of the wall-painting of the Last Judgement, from Christ Antiphonetes.
Traces of the resin with which this section was stuck to the wall of the church can still be seen.

them so brutally from the building, in the hope of trading them for cash?

The first encounter – understanding the jigsaw

As a Cypriot, a refugee from Famagusta, I speak for the people of Cyprus when I say that of all the things we have lost since 1974, none is greater than the loss of our cultural heritage; it is tantamount to losing one's identity.

I became seriously interested in the issue of the destruction of cultural property when, in 1988, an art dealer in The Netherlands approached me in my capacity as Honorary Vice Consul and offered to return one of the Kanakaria mosaics and one icon. In exchange he wanted to retain 'legally' the mosaic of Saint Andrew. Naturally the response was NO. However, this was the start of a personal mission, driven very much by my strong feelings of injustice.

Up until 1995 several important art treasures had been recovered thanks to the efforts of others:

- the four Kanakaria mosaics (6th century),
- wall-paintings from the church of Saint Themonianos (13th century) (now exhibited at the Menil Foundation in Houston, Texas),
- an icon of Saint John the Baptist (*c.* 1100), from the church of the Virgin Asinou.

In all cases I had collected a mass of information on how the destruction occurred, who the key players were and their methods of trading. Although this information was used to assist in the above recoveries, it was still not sufficient to pinpoint individuals.

In 1995 it came to my attention that a family living in Rotterdam wished to sell four icons originating from the Antiphonetes church. In order to follow this up I needed to act in an official capacity on behalf of the owner, The Autocephalous Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus. His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos I, entrusted and encouraged me to pursue confiscation. He also provided the funds to take legal action.

730

Saint Thomas. Icon from the church of Saint Demetrianos at Omorphita. Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

7141

Unidentified saint from the wall-painting in the church of the Virgin Pergaminiotissa at Akanthos. 12th century. Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

Apostle Thaddeus. Mosaic from the church of the Virgin Kanakaria. 6th century BC.
Located in Munich in October 1997 and repatriated to Cyprus in December the same year.

To date we have achieved:

- the return of the icon of Archangel Michael, repatriated in August 1995,
- the confiscation of the Four Apostles from the Antiphonetes church, the case pending in the Dutch court, in Rotterdam,
- the location of the bema door from the church of Saint Anastasia at Peristeronas (in the College of Art, Osaka, Japan). We are working on various approaches to get it back.

The watershed – the German connection

In mid-1996 the Dutch art dealer who had contacted be in 1988 approached me again, with a proposition to deliver many important treasures stolen from Cyprus. He divulged that a large number of works of art were in Germany and Austria, in the hands of various possessors. However, he claimed that he could gather them all in Munich and buy them back for us.

The Dutch art dealer has no regular domicile and the identity of the possessors was unknown to us, which meant that a legal case could not be brought. Therefore our only choice was to trust this person to deliver the pieces – 32 wall-paintings from the Antiphonetes church and one mosaic from the Kanakaria (of Thaddaeus, also known as Jude).

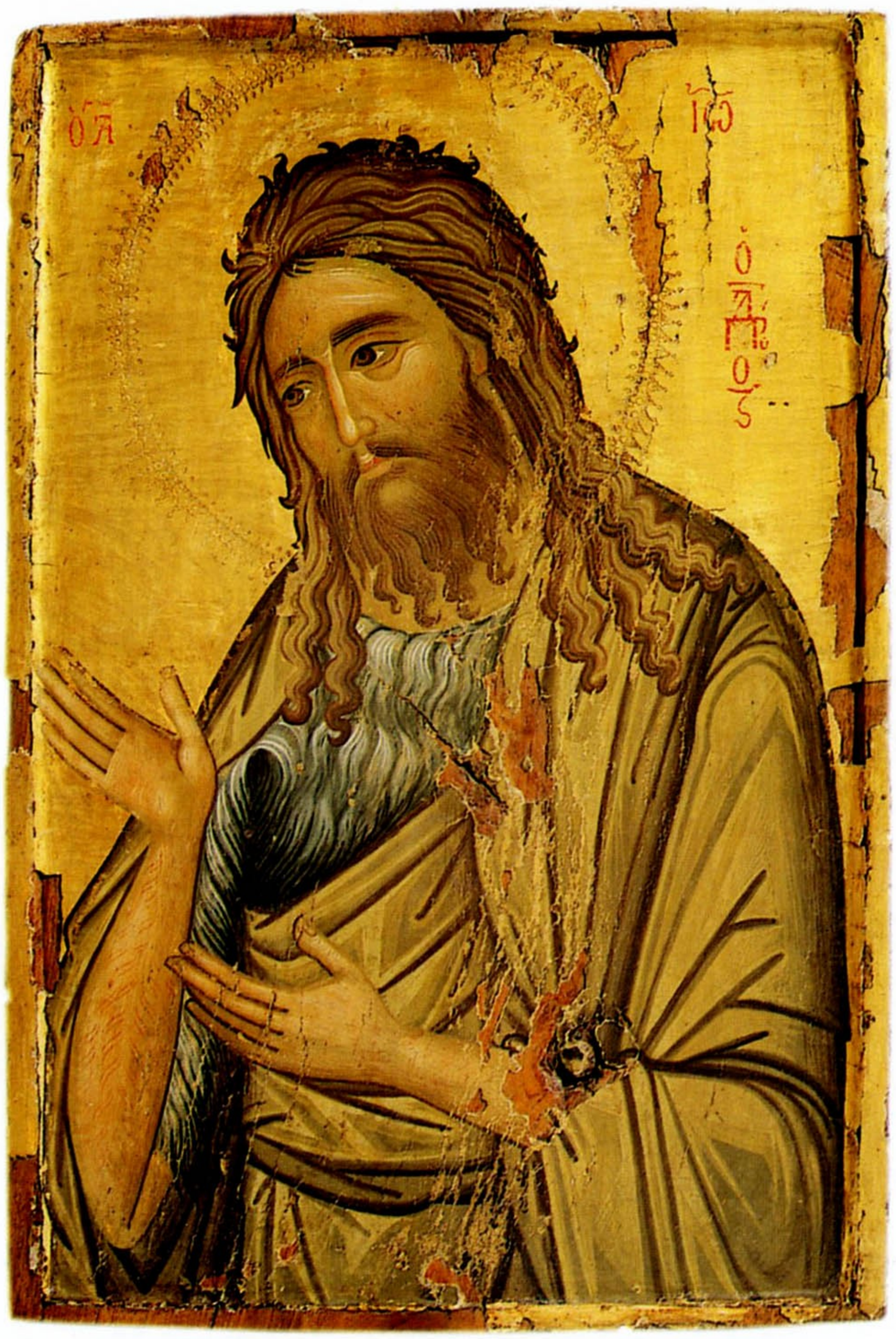
His Beatitude the Archbishop of Cyprus, Chrysostomos I and the Holy Synod approved the sum to be used to 'buy' these works of art and the strategy to be followed, in the hope that the dealer would be able to deliver subsequently many more. The transaction took place in a major bank in Rotterdam, where money was exchanged for the mosaic of Thaddaeus and the 32 wall-paintings. Dr A. Papageorgiou confirmed the authenticity of the pieces before we instructed the bank to make payment on their delivery. The Dutch art dealer secretly filmed the transaction in Germany. Once we had the film and the names of the key individuals, we called in the police and the authorities. Within a matter of days, with the co-operation of the German and Cypriot police, the Dutch dealer directly

Saint Mark, from the iconostasis in the church of Christ Antiphonetes. Plundered by the Turks and sold in Holland. The case is pending in the Dutch courts.

implicated the possessor, who was arrested on Friday 10 October 1997. Many more artefacts of Cypriot origin were discovered in his possession.

The beginning of the end

The case is now *sub judice*. The works of art are in the hands of the German police. The Dutch art dealer is only one of many dealers involved with trading our cultural heritage. We know who they are. Some have provided limited information, some have kept quiet. What we do have now are clear accounts and information of deals that have taken place. For the record, the Dutch art dealer had his own motives for volunteering to co-operate. Whatever they were, however, we believe he has more information to reveal. We are determined to finish this jigsaw, and there will be no more hiding behind a veil of indifference and half truths.



Saint John the Baptist.
Icon from the Palaeosophos church.
Repatriated to Cyprus
by a London art-dealer.

Archangel Michael between Saint Marina and Saint Eudokia.
Icon stolen from the Metropolis of Kyrenia and returned to Cyprus by its possessor.

7120

Saint Auxentios. Icon from the church of Saint Auxentios at Komi Kepir. 18th century. Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

725

The Raising of the Holy Cross. Icon from the katholikon of the Acheiropoietos Monastery at Lambousa. 18th century. Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen. At present in the custody of the Munich Police.

We thank all those who have exposed the issues surrounding the looting of the cultural heritage of Cyprus: Vrij Nederland, VARA, Channel 4, the BBC, *Algemeen, Dagblad, Volkskrant, The Times, The Independent* and other mass media.

The achievements in the last few months were made possible thanks to a significant dose of trust and goodwill. On the official side my relationship with the Archbishop and the Attorney General of Cyprus, on the unofficial my contacts with Dutch MPs, the senior Dutch government advisor, Ralph van Hessen, and ABN AMRO. All those involved, including the Dutch art dealer, shared the same belief – the destruction of our culture is a crime and we have a moral responsibility to ensure that works of art are returned to their rightful owners: the People of Cyprus.

On 17 October 1997 I formally requested, on behalf of the Church of Cyprus, restitution of the money used to 'buy back' the pieces of the wall-paintings. It is a matter for sobre reflection that we are forced to resort to such methods of retrieving what is rightfully our own. No Cypriot should have to pay for the return of his/her cultural heritage, but we are prepared to pay any price, when all else fails.

Bema door from the church of Saint Anastasia at Peristeronas, Famagusta. Stolen and sold in Osaka, Japan. Located in 1996. The Church of Cyprus has initiated legal proceedings to reclaim it.

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CORRIGENDA

Caption for front cover: Detail from the wall-painting of the Root of Jesse, from the church of Christ Antiphonetes in the occupied village of Kalograia, Kyrenia.

p.46, col. 1 line 4: for '*circa* 1300 BC' read '*circa* 1200 BC'.

p.99, caption at the bottom: for 'Early 14th century' read '13th-14th century'.

p. 106, first caption: for 'Found in the possession of Aydin Dikmen in Munich' read 'Found in Munich in the possession of Aydin Dikmen, to whom the numbers below the figures are due'.

p.137, col. 2, para. D: for 'Turkey is not a contracting party' read 'Turkey is a contracting party'.

p.208: reverse the captions 'King David' and 'Ahiah'.

p.220, first caption: for 'late 7th century BC' read 'late 6th century BC'

* The corrigenda are to errata in the Greek text. A. Doumas